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AMERICA IN THE WAR

V

OUR ARMY AT THE FRONT

From a painting by F. C. Yohn.

The battle of Seicheprey.

"All through the night the artillerymen sent their shells, encasing themselves in gas masks." (*Page 225*)

AMERICA IN THE WAR

OUR ARMY AT THE FRONT

BY

HEYWOOD BROUN

FORMERLY CORRESPONDENT FOR THE "NEW YORK TRIBUNE" WITH THE AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

ILLUSTRATED

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1919

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	The Landing of Pershing	1
II.	"Vive Pair-shang!"	11
III.	The First Division Lands	29
IV.	The Fourth of July	44
V.	What They Lived In	53
VI.	Getting Their Stride	66
VII.	Speeding Up	81
VIII.	Back with the Big Guns	96
IX.	The Eyes of the Army	107
X.	The Schools for Officers	117
XI.	Some Distinguished Visitors	124
XII.	The Men Who Did Everything	134
XIII.	Behind the Lines	145
XIV.	France and the Medicoes	158
XV.	In Charge of Morale	168
XVI.	Into the Trenches	177

CHAPTER PAGE

XVII. Our Own Sector 189

XVIII. A Civilian Visitor 200

XIX. A Famous Gesture 212

XX. The First Two Battles 224

XXI. Teufel-Hunden 237

XXII. The Army of Manœuvre 248

ILLUSTRATIONS

The battle of Seicheprey . . . . . *Frontispiece*

FACING PAGE

General Pershing in Paris, July, 1917 16

Buglers of the Alpine Chasseurs, assisted by their military band, entertaining American soldiers of the First Division 64

U. S. locomotive-assembling yards in France 154

Red Cross Hospital at Neuilly, formerly the American Ambulance Hospital 166

Secretary Baker riding on flat car during his tour of inspection of the American Expeditionary Forces . . . 202

U. S. Marines in readiness to march to the front 244

The capture of Sergy 262

OUR ARMY AT THE FRONT

CHAPTER I

THE LANDING OF PERSHING

A SHIP warped into an English port. Along her decks were lines of soldiers, of high and low degree, all in khaki. From the shore end of her gang-plank other lines of soldiers spread out like fan-sticks, some in khaki, some in the two blues of land and sea fighters. Decorating the fan-sticks were the scarlet and gold of staff-officers, the blue and gold of naval officers, the yellow and gold of land officers, and the black of a few distinguished civilians.

At the end of one shore-line of khaki one rigid private stood out from the rest, holding for dear life to a massive white goat. The goat was the most celebrated mascot in the British Army, and this was an affair of priceless consequence, but that was no sign the goat

intended to behave himself, and the private was responsible.

Weaving through this picture of military precision, three little groups of men waited restlessly to get aboard the ship. One was the lord mayor of the port city, his gilt chains of office blazing in the forenoon brightness, with his staff; another was the half-dozen or so of distinguished statesmen, diplomats, and military heroes bringing formal welcome to England; the third was the war correspondents and reporters from the London newspapers.

The waiting was too keen and anxious for talk. Excitement raced from man to man.

For the ship was the *Baltic*. The time was the morning of June 8, 1917. The event was the landing of John J. Pershing, commander of America's Expeditionary Force. And the soldiers with him were the herald of America's coming—the holding of her drive with an outpost.

When the grandchildren of those soldiers learn that date in their history lessons it is safe to assume that all its historical significance will be fairly worked out and articulate.

It is equally safe to say that in the moment

of its happening few if any of its participants, even the most consequential and far-seeing, had a personal sense of making history. Of all the pies that one may not both eat and have, the foremost is that very taking part in a great occasion. All the fun of it is being got by the man who stays at home and reads the newspapers, undistracted by the press of practical matters in hand.

True, for the landing of General Pershing there was the color of soldiery, the blare of brass bands, the ring of great names among the welcomers. There was, of course, the overtone picture of a great chieftain, marching in advance of a great army, come to foreign lands to add their might to what, with their coming, was then a world in arms. The future might see, blended with the gray hulk of the *Baltic*, the shadowy shape of the *Mayflower* coming back, still carrying men bound to the service of world freedom.

But what they saw that morning was, after all, a very modern landing, from a very modern ship, with sailors hastily tying down a gangplank, and doing it very well because they had done it just that way so many times before.

The Royal Welsh Fusiliers were down to give a military welcome, with their mascot and their crack band. The lord mayor, Lieutenant-General Pitcairn Campbell, Admiral Stileman, and other men from both arms of England's service were there, not to feel of their feelings, but to make the landing as agreeable and convenient as possible, and to convey to General Pershing, with Anglo-Saxon mannerliness and reticence, their great pleasure at having him come.

As soon as there was access to the ship General Campbell and Admiral Stileman went aboard and introduced themselves to General Pershing. They met, also, a few of the American staff-officers, and returned salutes from the privates who made up the Pershing entourage of 168 men.

There were congratulations on the ship's safe arrival, which reminded General Pershing and some of his officers that they wanted, before leaving the ship, to pay their respects to the skipper who had carried them through the danger zone without so much as a sniff at a submarine.

This done, the little company of officers

walked down the gang-plank, talking cheerily of their satisfaction at meeting, of their hard work on the ship, of the weather, and what-not, all the while the soldiers on the decks behind them waved hands and handkerchiefs in a general overflow of well-being, and finally—set foot in England!

One may not go too far in describing the contents of a general's mind without some help from him, but it's a fair guess that if General Pershing is as kin to his kind as he seems to be, the very precise moment of this setting foot in England escaped his notice altogether, and was left free for the historian to embroider how he pleased. For General Pershing was in the act of being led to the salute of a guard of honor by General Campbell. And almost immediately after that precise moment the Welsh Fusiliers' band began the "Star-Spangled Banner," and again it's a good bet that General Pershing and his staff thought not a thing about England and a lot about home.

But so the historic moment came, and so it went. And presently the American vanguard was finding its places in the special train to London.

Perhaps England knew that a great hour was in the making, for her rolling green hills gave back the warmth of a splendid sun, and her hedgerows and wild blooms braved forth in crystal air. Those of the newcomers who saw England first that afternoon thanked their stars fervently that England and democracy were on the same side.

In mid-afternoon the train reached London, and here the Americans were greeted, not alone by soldiers and England, but by the English. The secret of their coming, carefully kept, had given the port civilians no chance. But they knew it in London and the station was crowded to its doors.

General Pershing stepped from the train as soon as it stopped. Ambassador Walter Hines Page came over to him, both hands outstretched, and asked leave to introduce another general who had taken an Expeditionary Force to France—General Sir John French. Other introductions followed—to Lord Derby, General Lord Brooke, and Sir Francis Lloyd. And there was a hearty handshake from a fighter who needed no introduction—Rear-Admiral William E. Sims.

Inside and outside the station the civilians cheered. None of them needed to have General Pershing pointed out to them. He was unmistakable. No man ever looked more the ordained leader of fighting men. He was tall, broad, and deep-chested, splendidly set up; and to the care with which Providence had fashioned him he had added soldierly care of his own.

He might have been patterned upon the Freudian dream of Julius Cæsar, if Julius was in truth the unsoldierly looking person they made him out to be, whose majesty lay wholly in his own mind's eye.

The gallant look of General Pershing fanned the London friendliness to contagious flames of enthusiasm. He and his officers were cheered to their hotel, the soldiers were cheered to their barracks in the Tower of London.

At the hotel they found three floors turned over to them, arranged for good, hard work, with plenty of desk-room, and boy and girl scouts for running errands. Squarely in the entrance was a money-changer's desk, with a patient man in charge who could, and did,

name the number of cents to the shilling once every minute for four days. A little English lady who visited America complained bitterly, just after arrival, "Why didn't they make their dollar just four shillings?" thereby summing up the only really valid source of acrimony between England and America. The money-changer made the international amity complete.

Once installed, General Pershing and his staff fell to and worked, continuing the organization that had been roughly blocked out on the *Baltic*, and building up the liaison between English and American army procedure, begun by the help of British and Canadian officers on board, by frequent conferences with England's State, War, and Navy Departments.

The day after the arrival General Pershing went to "breakfast at Windsor," the first meeting between America's fighter and England's King. Here, at last, the momentousness of the matter found voice.

King George, having done with the introductory greeting, said earnestly: "I cannot tell you how much your coming means to me. It has been the great dream of my life that my

country and yours would join in some great enterprise . . . and here you are. . . ."

After this visit, prolonged by an inspection of the historic treasures of Windsor Castle, General Pershing made the rule of unbroken work for himself and his officers till his task in London was finished and he should leave for France to join his First Division.

He made what he expected to be a single exception to this rule. He went to a dinner-party, at which he met Lloyd-George, Arthur Balfour, just back from his American mission, and half a dozen others of commensurate distinction. He found that his exception was no exception at all. The English do not merely have the reputation of doing their real work at their dinner-parties—they deserve that reputation. Staff-officers, telling all about it later on, said that it could hardly have been distinguished from a cabinet meeting, or a report from the Secretary of State for War. So were the final plans made and the business of the nations settled.

Concerning all these meetings and all the national feeling that was behind them, General

Pershing and his officers were of one voice—that England's welcome had been precisely of the sort that pleased them most. It was reticent, charming, too genuine for much open expression, too chivalrous at heart to be obtrusive.

What with spending most of each twenty-four hours at work, the American vanguard finished up its affairs in four days. And early on the morning of June 13, long before the break of day, General Pershing and his officers and men boarded their Channel boat, the *Invicta*, and set sail for France.

CHAPTER II

"VIVE PAIR-SHANG!"

THE *Invicta* came into Boulogne harbor in the early morning, to find that her attempts at a secret crossing had amounted to nothing at all. Everybody within sight and ear-shot was out to show how pleased he was, riotously and openly, indifferent alike to the hopes of spy or censor.

The fishing-boats, the merchant coastwise fleet, the Channel ships and hordes of little privately owned sloops and yawls and motor-boats all plied chipperly around with "bannières étoilées" fore and aft. The sun was very bright and the water was very blue, and between them was that exhilarating air which always rises over the coasts of France, whenever and wherever you land on them, which not all the smoke and grime of the world's biggest war could deaden or destroy.

The *Invicta's* own flags were run up at the

harbor mouth. Again the lines of khaki-colored soldiers formed behind the deck-rails, and again the chieftain from overseas stood at the prow of his ship and waited the coming of a historic moment.

When the *Invicta* was made fast and her gang-plank went over, there was a half-circle of space cleared in the quay in front of her by a detachment of grizzled French infantrymen, their horizon-blue uniforms filmed over with the yellow dust of a long march.

Behind the infantrymen the good citizens of Boulogne were yelling their throats dry. When General Pershing stopped for an instant's survey at the head of the gang-plank, with his staff-officers close behind him, the roar of welcome swelled to thunder and resounded out to sea. When he marched down and stepped to the quay, there was a sudden, arresting silence. Every soldier was at salute, and every civilian, too. In that tense instant a new world was beginning, and though it was as formless as all beginnings, the unerringly dramatic and sensitive French paid the tribute of silence to its birth. The future was to say that in that in-

stant the world allied on new bases, that men now fought together not because their lands lay neighboring, or were jointly menaced by some central foe, but because they would follow their own ideal to wherever it was in danger. An American general had brought his fighters three thousand miles because a principle of world order and world right needed the added strength of his arms. And never before had American soldiers come in their uniforms to do battle on the continent of Europe.

The moment's silence ended as startlingly as it began. Bands and cheerers set in again on one beat. The officers who had come to make a formal welcome fell back and let the unprepared public uproar have way.

General Pershing and his officers walked through aisles strenuously forced by the infantrymen, to where carriages waited to carry them through the Boulogne streets.

It must have seemed to the little American contingent as if every Frenchman in France had come up to the coast for the celebration.

From the carriages the crowds stretched solid in every direction. The streets were blanketed

under uncountable flags. Every window held its capacity of laughing and cheering Frenchwomen.

Children ran along the streets, shrilling "Vive l'Amérique!" and laughing hilariously when their flowers were caught by the grateful but embarrassed American officers.

When the special train to Paris had started the officers mopped their faces and settled back for a modest time. But they reckoned without their French. Not a town along the way missed its chance to greet the Americans. The stations were packed, the cheers were incessant, the roses poured in deluges into the train-windows.

But at the Gare du Nord, in Paris, the official French greeting was too magnificent to be pushed aside further by mere populace.

There were cordons of soldiers drawn up in the station, stiff at attention, making aisles by which the French officials could get to the Americans. There were officers in brilliant uniform, covered with medals for heroic service. There were massed bands, led by the Garde Republicaine. "Papa Joffre" was there, with

The King's Library

his co-missioner, Viviani; Painleve, then Minister of War, and presently to have a while as Premier; General Foch, Marne hero, now generalissimo, and Ambassador William G. Sharp.

These, with General Pershing, Major Robert Bacon, a member of Pershing's staff and lately ambassador to France, and two or three other staff-officers, found open motor-cars waiting to drive them to the Hotel Crillon, on the Place de la Concorde, the temporary American headquarters.

Dense crowds of soldiers patrolled the streets leading down to the Grand Boulevards, through which the distinguished little procession was to take its way, and other soldiers lined up at attention in the boulevards.

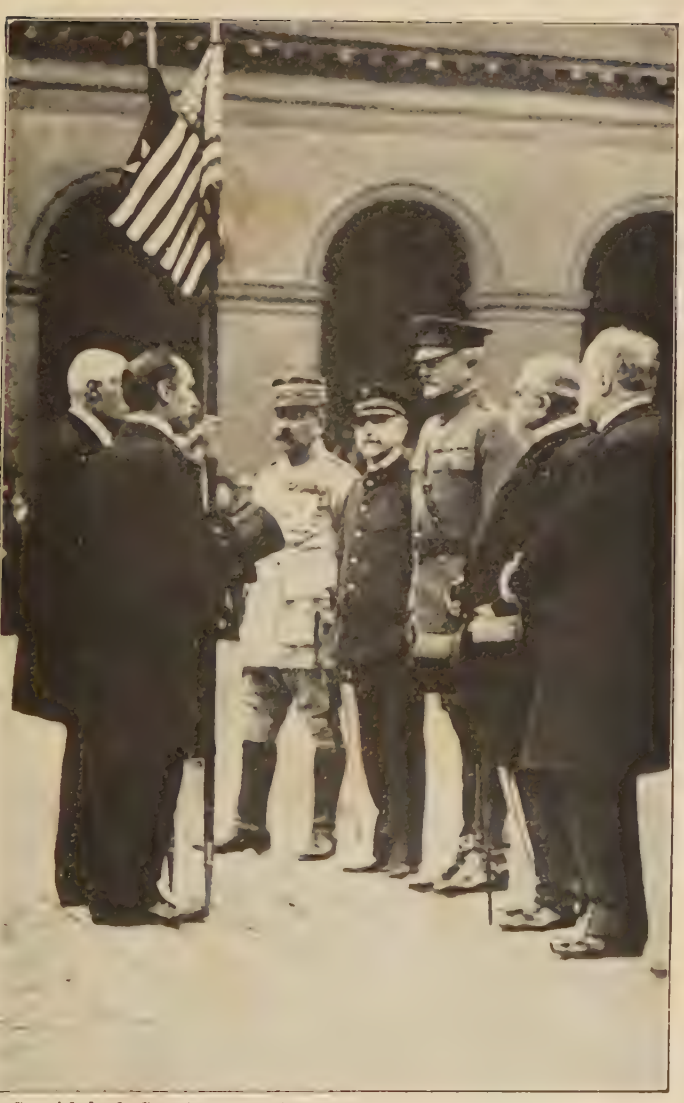
Paris turned loose, with her heart in her mouth and her enthusiasm at red heat, is not easily forgotten. On this June day her raptures were immemorial. They were of a sort to call out the old-timers for standards of comparison.

Every sentence now spoken in France begins either "Avant la guerre" or "Depuis la guerre."

Nobody can ignore the fact that with August, 1914, the whole of life changed. To the old-timers who wanted to tell you what Paris was like the afternoon Pershing arrived, there were only two occasions possible, both "Depuis la guerre."

The first great day was that following the order for general mobilization, when exaltation, defiance, threat, and frenzy packed the national spirit to suffocation, and when the streets flowed with unending streams of grim but undaunted people. Tragic days and relief days followed. But the next great time, when tragedy did not outweigh every other feeling, was that 14th of July, 1916, when the military parades were begun again, for the first time since the war, and in the line of march were detachments from the armies of all the Allies.

The third great French war festival was for Pershing. The crowds were literally everywhere. The streets through which the motors passed were tightly blocked except for the little road cleared by the soldiers. The streets giving off these were jammed solid. American flags were in every window, on every lamp-post,



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General Pershing in Paris, July, 1917.

on every taxicab, and in every wildly waving hand.

Although the soldiers could force a way open before the motor-cars, no human agency could keep the way free behind them. The Parisians wanted not merely to see Pershing—they wanted to march with him. So they fell in, tramping the boulevards close behind the cars, cheering and singing to their marching step.

Only when General Pershing disappeared under the arched doorway of the Hotel Crillon, and let it be known that he had other gear to tend, did the city in procession break apart and go about its several private celebrations.

But all that afternoon and all that night, wherever men and women collected, or children were underfoot, it was "Vive l'Amérique" and "Vive le Generale Pair-shang" that echoed when the glasses rose.

When General Pershing, after the tremendous experience of his European landing, asked for the quiet and shelter of his own quarters at the Crillon, his intention was that his retirement should be complete. He said flatly that a man who had just witnessed such a tribute to his

country as Paris had made that afternoon was no better than he should be if he did not feel the need of solitude.

But the inevitable aftermath of the great event the world over is the talking with the newspapers. And sure enough, no sooner was General Pershing safe in his retreat than the Paris reporters were knocking at the door. The American correspondents who had travelled over from London on the *Invicta* had had emphatic instructions to stay away, story or no story. But one distinguished Frenchman broke the rules, and to François de Jessen, of *Le Temps*, General Pershing did finally give a statement. How reluctantly one may see from the statement's contents.

"I came to Europe to organize the participation of our army in this immense conflict of free nations against the enemies of liberty, and not to deliver fine speeches at banquets, or have them published in the newspapers," said General Pershing. "Besides, that is not my business, and, you know, we Americans, soldiers and civilians, like not only to appear, but to be, businesslike. However, since you offer me an

opportunity to speak to France, I am glad to make you a short and simple confession.

"As a man and as a soldier I am profoundly happy over, indeed proud of, the high mission with which I am charged. But all this is purely personal, and might appear out of proportion with the solemnity of the hour and the gravity of events now occurring. If I have thought it proper to indulge in this confidence, it is because I wish to express my admiration of the French soldier, and at the same time to express my pride in being at the side of the French and allied armies.

"It is much more important, I think, to announce that we are the precursors of an army that is firmly resolved to do its part on the Continent for the cause the American nation has adopted as its own. We come conscious of the historic duty to be performed when our flag shows itself upon the battle-fields of the world. It is not my rôle to promise or to prophesy. Let it suffice to tell you that we know what we are doing, and what we want."

Two rememberable experiences waited the next day for General Pershing. The first was

his visit to des Invalides, the tomb of Napoleon; the second, his appearance in the French Chamber of Deputies. If he had known what it was to be the hero of all Paris at once, he was to learn how special groups regarded him, and what the French highest-in-command thought fitting for America's leader.

At all of General Pershing's appearances in Paris in these first days a detachment of soldiers had to be constantly before him, widening a way for him through the crowds that waited his coming. On the morning of his visit to the tomb of Napoleon the broad Champs de Mars, in front of des Invalides, was impassable except by the soldiers' flying wedge. Shouts in French rang out steadily as he made his way toward des Invalides' entrances, and suddenly a man cried, in accented English: "Behind him there are ten million more."

But once inside des Invalides General Pershing was alone with General Niox, who was in charge of the famous treasure building, and General Joffre. Between Pershing and Joffre there had begun one of those intense friendships that form too impetuously for ordinary expla-

nation. It was full-grown at the end of their first meeting, a matter of seconds. And though at this time their friendly intercourse was halted sometimes by the fact that neither spoke the other's language, they were continually together.

So it was General Joffre who walked beside him when General Pershing followed General Niox down to the entrance of the crypt, and stood before the door. All the world may go to this door, if its behavior is good, but only royal applicants may go beyond it.

General Pershing was to go inside. General Niox handed him the great key, then turned away with Joffre, while Pershing, after a moment's hesitation, fitted the key and crossed the threshold. When he came out again he was taken to see the Napoleonic relics, which lay in rows in their glass cases. Two of them, the great sword and the Grand Cross cordon of the Legion of Honor, had never been touched since the time of Louis Philippe. As Pershing and Joffre bent over them General Niox came to a momentous decision. He opened the cases and handed the two to General Pershing. France could do no more.

Pershing held them for a moment and nobody spoke. Then he handed back the cordon, kissed the sword-hilt and presented it, and in profound silence the three men left the treasure hall.

Between this visit and that to the Chamber of Deputies there were many official calls, including one to President Poincaré at the Elysée Palace, which ended in a formal luncheon to Pershing by President and Madame Poincaré, with most of the important men of France as fellow guests.

General Pershing was recognized as he entered the gallery of the Chamber of Deputies, and all other business except that of doing him honor was promptly put by. Full-throated cheering began and would not die down. Finally Premier Ribot commenced to speak, and the deputies stopped to listen.

"The people of France fully understand the deep significance of the arrival of General Pershing in France," he said. "It is one of the greatest events in history that the people of the United States should come here to struggle, not in the spirit of ambition or conquest, but

for the noble ideals of justice and liberty. The arrival of General Pershing is a new message from President Wilson which, if that is possible, surpasses in nobility all those preceding it."

And Viviani said, a few minutes later: "President Wilson holds in his hand all the historic grandeur of America, which he now puts forth in this fraternal union extended to us by the Great Republic."

These two speeches opened a flood-gate. Long after the cheering deputies had said their good-bys to General Pershing, the French writers, made articulate by the example of Ribot and Viviani, were busily preparing appreciations and commentaries of the Pershing arrival. The most picturesque of these was Maurice de Waleffe's, in *Le Journal:* "'There are no longer any Pyrenees,' said Louis XIV, when he married a Spanish princess. 'There is no longer an ocean,' General Pershing might say, with greater justice, as he is about to mingle with ours the democratic blood of his soldiers. The fusion of Europe and America is an enormous fact to note."

A more powerful speech was that of Clemen-

ceau, now Premier of France, but then an earnest private citizen, writing for his paper. "Paris has given its finest welcome to General Pershing," he wrote. "We are justified. We are justified in hoping that the acclamation of our fellow citizens, with whom are mingled crowds of soldiers home on leave, have shown him clearly, right at the start, in what spirit we are waging the bloodiest of wars; with what invincible determination, never to falter in any fibre of our nerves or muscles. Unless I misjudge America, General Pershing, fully conscious of the importance of his mission, has received from the cordial and joyous enthusiasm of the Parisians that kind of fraternal encouragement which is never superfluous, even when one needs it not.

"Let him have no doubt that he, too, has brought encouragement to us, the whole of France, that followed with its eyes the whole of his passage along the boulevards; to all our hearts that salute his coming with joy at the supreme grandeur of America's might enrolled under the standard of right.

"This idea M. Viviani, just back from Amer-

ica, splendidly developed in his eloquent speech to the Chamber of Deputies in the presence of General Pershing.

"General Pershing himself, less dramatic, has given us, in three phrases devoid of artificiality, an impression of exceptionally virile force. It was no rhetoric but the pure simplicity of the soldier who is here to act, and who fears to promise more than he can perform. No bad sign, this, for those of us who have grown weary of pompous words, when we must pay so dearly for each failure of performance.

"Not long ago the Germans laughed at the 'contemptible English Army,' and we hear now that they regard the American Army as 'too ridiculous for words.' Well, the British have taught even Hindenburg himself what virile force can do toward filling gaps in organization. Now the arrival of Pershing brings Hindenburg news that the Americans are setting to work in their turn—those Americans whose performance in the War of Secession showed them capable of such 'improvisation of war' as the world had never seen—and I think the Kaiser must be beginning to wonder whether he has not trusted

rather blindly in his 'German tribal God.' He has loosed the lion from its cage, and now he finds that the lion has teeth and claws to rend him.

"The Kaiser had given us but a few weeks in which to realize that the success of his submarine campaign would impose the silence of terror on the human conscience throughout the world. Well, painful as he must find it, Pershing's arrival, with its consequent military action, cannot fail to prove to him that, after all, the moral forces he ignored must always be taken into account in forecasting human probabilities. Those learned Boches have yet to understand that in the course of his intellectual evolution, man has achieved the setting of moral right above brute force; that might is taking its stand beside right, to accomplish the greatest revolution in the history of mankind. That is the lesson which Pershing's coming has taught us, and that is why we rejoice."

But even while the commentators were at their task General Pershing had left off celebrating and got to work. The First Division was on the seas.

A few very important persons in France and America knew where they were to land, and when, but nobody in the world knew just what was to be done for and with them once they landed, for the plans did not even exist. It was the business of the general and his staff to create them. And they say that the amount of work done in those first days in France was incredible even to them when they looked back on it.

As a first step American headquarters were installed in 31 Rue Constantine, a broad, shaded street near the Hôtel des Invalides, overlooking the Champs de Mars. The house had belonged once to a prodigiously popular Paris actress, and it was correspondingly magnificent.

But the magnificence, except that which was inalienably in space and structure, was banished by the busy Americans. In the hallway they stretched a plank railing, behind which American private soldiers asked and answered questions. Under the once sumptuous stairway there were stacks of army cots. The walls were bulletined and covered with directions carefully done in two languages. The chief of

the Intelligence Section had the ex-dining-room, and the adjutant-general had the ballroom on the second floor. Even so, it was not long before this spaciousness was insufficient, and the headquarters brimmed over into No. 27 as well.

It was in these two houses that the whole army organization was plotted out, and General Pershing made good his prediction that the Americans would not merely seem, but would be, businesslike.

After ten days or so of beaver-like absorption in their jobs the American headquarters announced to the war correspondents that they must take a certain train at a certain hour, under the guidance of Major Frederick Palmer, press officer and censor, to a certain port in France. There, at a certain moment, they would see what they would see.

CHAPTER III

THE FIRST DIVISION LANDS

THEY saw the gray troop-ships steaming majestically into the middle distance from the gray of the open sea, with the little convoy fleet alongside. It was a gray morning, and at first the ships were hardly more than nebulous patches of a deeper tone than sea and sky. As they neared the port, and took on outline, the watchers increased, and took on internationalism.

The Americans, who had come to see this consequential landing, some in uniform and some civilians, had arrived in the very early morning, before the inhabitants of the little seaport town were up and about, let alone aware of what an event was that day to put them into the history books.

But it never takes a French civilian long to discover that something is afoot—what with three years of big happenings to sharpen his wits and keep him on the lookout.

At the front of the quay were Americans two deep, straining to make out the incoming ships, on tiptoe to count their number, breathless to shout a welcome to the first "Old Glory" to be let loose to the harbor winds. Forming rapidly behind the Americans were French men, French women, and French children, indifferent to affairs, kitchens, or schools, chattering that "Mais surement, c' sont les Américains —regardez, regardez! . . ."

Ignominiously in the rear, but watching too, were the German prisoners who worked, in theory at least, at transferring rails from inconvenient places to convenient ones for the loading of coaster steamers. They said little enough, having learned that a respectful hearing was not to be their lot for a while. But they moved fewer rails than ever, and nobody bothered to speed them up.

The great ships came in slowly. Before long, the watchers could see lines of dull yellow banding the gray hulks, and then the yellow lines took on form and separateness, and were visible one soldier at a time.

Last, one ship steamed apart from the others

and made direct for the quay, and the solemn business of landing American troops on French soil was about to begin.

There was to be a certain ceremony for the landing, but, like all the ceremonies conceded to these great occasions by the American Army, it was to be of extreme simplicity. When they were near enough to the quay to be heard, the transport band played "The Star-Spangled Banner," while all the soldiers stood at salute, and then they played the "Marseillaise," while everybody on ship and shore stood at salute. With that, they called it a morning, as far as celebration was concerned, and to the accompaniment of a great deal of talk and a volley of light-hearted questions, they began to disembark.

The first question, called from some distance away, was: "What place is this?" The next was, "Do they let the enlisted men drink in the saloons over here?" and there was a miscellany about apple pie and doughnuts, cigarettes, etc. And very briefly after the first soldiers were ashore nothing could be heard but "Don't they speak any English at all?"

The outstanding impression of that morning may be what it will to the French civilians, to the American newspaper correspondents, and to the officers both ashore and on board. To the privates of the First Division it will always be the incomprehensible nonsense that goes by the name of the French language, spoken with perfect assurance by people old enough to know better, who refuse to make one syllable of intelligible sound in answer to even the simplest requests.

The privates were prepared to hear the French speak their own language at mention of Alsace-Lorraine and war aims, or to propound their private philosophies that way. They granted the right of the French to talk how they pleased of their emotional pleasure at seeing the troops, or of any other subject above the timber-line.

What staggered them was the insane top-loftiness of using French to ask for ham and eggs, and beer, or the way to camp. For nothing, not volumes of warning before they left home, nor interminable hours of French-grammar instruction on board the troop-ships, had really got it deep inside the American private's head

that French was not an accomplishment to be used as evidence of cosmopolitan culture, but a mere prosy necessity, without which daily existence was a nightmare and a frustration.

The French, on their side, were helpless enough, but not so bewildered. They had lived too long, in peace as well as war, across a narrow channel from that stanch English-speaking race who brought both their tea and their language with them to France and everywhere else, to be dumfounded that strangers should balk at their foreign tongue.

The inevitable result was that here, in their first contact with the French, as later, throughout the fighting areas, the American soldiers learned to understand French-English long before they could speak a decent word of French.

Fortunately for the First Division, it had had some able bilingual forerunners at the seaport town where they landed. The camps had been built by the French, a few miles back from the town, but a few of the housekeeping necessities had been installed by General Pershing's staff-officers, and signs in good, plain English showed the proper roads. And as the single

files of soldiers began to descend the gang-plank of the first transport, and to form for marching to camp, their own officers were having some compact instruction from the staff-officers on how to get to camp and what to do when they got there.

There was no waste motion about getting the troops under way. The first companies were tramp-tramping up the streets before the last companies were overside, and the first transport was free to go back and give place to the next one before the mayor had got his red sash and gilt chains in place and arrived to do them suitable honor.

So, while the shore watchers fell back into safe observation-posts, the soldiers clattered down through the quay-sheds to the little street, formed and swung away, and one ship after another disgorged its passengers, and presently the sheds were overrun with the blue-clad sailors from the convoys.

All that day, the soldiers marched through the town. Their camps lay at the end of a long white shore road, and jobs were not wanting when they got there. Their pace was easy,

because of these things, and they probably would not have put out any French eye with their flawless marching, even under less indulgent circumstances. For this First Division was recruited in a hurry, and most of their real training lay ahead of them.

Where they were impressive was in their composite build. There were little fellows among them, but they straggled at the back. The major part of the soldiers were tall, thin, rangy-looking, with a march that was more lope than anything else and a look of heaving their packs along without much effort. They fell about midway between the thin, breedy look of the first English troops in France and the stocky, thick-necked sort that came later.

The marines were the pick of the lot, for size and behavior too. The sense of being something special was with the marines from the first. They marched that way. And, set apart by their olive drab as well as by their size and comportment, they gave that First Division's first march in France a quality of real distinction. And when the army got to its first French camps, the welcome sight its eyes first fell

upon was that of already arrived marines carrying water down the hill.

The camps were long wooden buildings, rather above the average, as became the status of the visitors, built almost at the top of a hill, looking down over green fields and round trees to the three or four villages within range of vision, and beyond them to the sea.

Some supplies were there already, but the soldiers had had to bring most of their first supper, and the camp-cooks had their own troubles getting things just so.

Major-General Sibert, field commander of the First Division, had quarters at camp, so that excuses were not in order. Even for that first supper, the marines and all others they could commandeer to help them were rushing about preparing things to the very top of their bent. Nobody had town-leave for the first day or two, till things were in apple-pie order, and the camp was in line to shelter and feed its soldiers for as long as it should be necessary to stay there.

If camp life was busy these days, the town life was no less so. The chief hotel, wherein

much red plush met the eye from the very entrance, was swarming with officers of both nations and all degrees of rank. General Pershing was there, with his aides and most of his staff. Admirals were there, changing uniforms from blue to white and back again as the erratic French weather dictated.

There were half a dozen high officers from the French Army, making both formal and informal welcomes, and there were more busy majors and captains and more interpreters than you could count in half a day's time.

The little Frenchwoman who sat behind the desk was amiable to the best of her very considerable ability, but the questions she had to answer, whether she understood them or not, would have addled an older head than hers. She could run her hotel with the best of them, but when perfectly sane-looking young officers asked her where to buy five thousand cups and saucers, and paper napkins by the ton, she said in so many words that an American invasion was worse than bedlam.

The hotel's second floor was the favored place for conferences. There a fair welter of

red plush was drawn up around a big table in the hallway, and livid red wall-paper added its warmth to a scene which against a plank wall would not have lacked color.

At this table General Pershing could have been found much of the time. The whole practical liaison of French and American Armies was contrived here, though the first rule for this consolidation laid down by a grizzled French general with but one arm left, was that "there was no longer anything that was French, or anything that was American, but merely all we had that was 'ours,'" so that the task was one of detail only.

Though the daytimes were packed with work, most of the officers called it a day at sunset. Then the little hotel took on its most engaging color. The little French piano tinkled out in the warm air with an accompaniment of many voices. Once a very blue young second lieutenant chose to express his mood by repetitions without number of the melancholy "Warum?" —probably the first German music that had been heard from that piano for many a moon. Possibly those of the French who knew what the tune

was recognized also that America had turned a point in more ways than one in coming to France, not least among them being making good American soldiers out of erstwhile good Germans. Nobody seemed much astonished or put out when within the day a goodly number of American soldiers were speaking to German prisoners in their own language, though talking to the German prisoners, aside from the fact that it was not encouraged by the French, turned out to be indifferent fun, since the American soldiers had had their fill of German propaganda before they left home, and none of the prisoners was overmodest as to what Germany was or would do.

The cafés out-of-doors were overflowing with Americans, too. It was plenty of fun to hear the sailors scolding the French waitresses for calling lemons "limons," and trying to overhaul the French pronunciation of "bière" to something approaching a compromise.

An officer came along and broke up a crap-game. The soldiers forgave him, but the civilians did not. It was their first go at the game, and they wanted a lot of teaching.

The lone bookstore of the town made the only known effort to get the Americans what they asked for, instead of trying to prevail on them to adopt something French. They sent, perhaps to Paris, to get English books, and they piled their windows high with Macaulay's "History of England" and Bacon's "Essays."

The paper-buying habit is ingrown in the American male. He has three newspapers under his arm before any afternoon is what it should be. And so the soldiers bought the French papers, two and three at a time, and carried them around.

Any time of day or night, a look out into the town's main street descried a company or two of soldiers, on their way from camp for town-leave, or on their way back. They marched continually. The motor-cycle with the side-seat, which was later to be the distinguishing mark of the American Army in Paris, made its appearance in the seaport within a day or two of the first transport's landing, and eased the burdens of the French motor-lorries with which the American supplies had been taken to camp,

owing to a delay of the First Division's own lorries, on a slow ship.

And most successful sensation of all, the army mule. The French knew him slightly, because their own army used him on occasion. But no Frenchman could speak to a mule in his own language as these big mule-tenders did.

It was exalting to watch the army on the march, to see the marines and the profusion of slim sailors. But the real crowd always gathered around the big negro stevedores in long navy-blue coats, scarlet-lined, with brass buttons all the way up the front, over and down the back—likely a thrifty hand-me-down from pre-khaki days—who marched with perfect knowledge of their magnificence.

The stevedores, for their part, were as amazed as the French, though on a different score. They accepted with due resignation the fact that the French spoke French. It was when they first saw a Senegalese in French uniform, triple-black with tropic suns, but to them a mere one of themselves, and when they hailed him gladly in their English tongue, to ask which road to take, that his indecipherable

French answer broke them, heart and spirit alike.

"Dat one blame stuck-up nigger," said the spokesman, as they trudged their way onward, none the wiser if the Senegalese, in his turn, had been rebuking them in French for showing off their English.

So, in its several aspects, the First Division made its impact upon France, jostled itself a little and the French more, and finally settled down to its short wait at the coast before going inland, "within sound of the guns," to get its training.

And because the camps were to be used many times again by other divisions to come on the "bridge of ships," the first had to put in some extra licks to make their camp conveniences permanent.

They played a few baseball-games, and they were encouraged to do a lot of swimming, in the off afternoon hours. After a bit town-leave was heavily curtailed, but there was a dispensation now and then for a "movie." In the main they kept their noses to the grindstone.

After a little while the men who were to

march in Paris on the Fourth of July were selected, and, preceded by a few sailors with fewer duties and longer indulgences, they entrained on the late afternoon of July 2. There was no measuring the disappointment of the ones who were left behind, for the prediction that there would be doings in Paris on the first French Fourth of July was to be fulfilled to the letter.

But the housekeepers of the army could not be spared for celebrations. As soon as the marines could be despatched from the seaport they were sent direct across France to the points behind the lines where their training-camps were in waiting, and there, within a few weeks, the First Division reassembled and fell to work.

Meanwhile, of the doings in Paris——

CHAPTER IV

THE FOURTH OF JULY

THE first they knew of it in Paris—barring vague promises of "something to remember" on the American fête that had appeared in modest items in the newspapers—was when a motor-bus, jammed to the guards with American soldiers, suddenly rolled into the Avenue de l'Opéra from the Tuileries Gardens, and paraded up that august thoroughfare to the tune of incredible yelling from everybody on board. It was the afternoon of July 3.

A few picked Americans had known about it. A sufficient number of American and French officers and the newspaper correspondents had been told to appear at Austerlitz Station in the early morning of the 3d, and there they had seen the soldiers not merely arrive but tackle their first continental breakfast.

Neither was a sensation to be sneezed at. The soldiers were of the very finest, and in

spite of their overnight journey they were all looking fit. They were anxious to fall right out of the train into the middle of Paris. To most of them it was a city of gallant and delightful scandal, filled even in war-time with that twinkle of gayety plus wickedness that is so intriguing when told about in Oscaloosa, behind the hand or the door. They said outright that they expected to see the post-cards all come to life when they set eyes first on Paris streets.

But even if Paris had had these fascinations in store, they were not for the soldiers that morning. Instead military precision, discipline, an orderly march to near-by barracks, and—a French breakfast: coffee and war-bread. Not even the French had a kind word for the war-bread, and no American ever spoke well of the coffee. But there it was—chronologically in order, and haply the worst of a Paris visit all over at once.

And most of the soldiers stayed right in barracks till it was time for the great processional the next day. It was a picked bunch that had the motor ride and informed Paris that they

had come for a party. And if they didn't see the ladies with the unbehaving eyes, they did see the Louvre and the Tuileries, the Opéra, the boulevards, and the Madeleine. And Paris saw the soldiers.

There was no end of cheering and handclapping. The American flags that had been flying for Pershing were brought out again, and venders appeared on the streets with all manner of emblems to sell. It was one of those cheerful afternoons when good feeling expresses itself gently, reserving its hurrahs for the coming event.

The soldiers were kept on the cars, but now and then a good Parisian threw them a package of cigarettes or a flower. All told, they touched off the fuse timed to explode on the morrow, and, having done that, went back to barracks.

The first "Fourth" in Paris was a thoroughly whole-souled celebration. The French began it, civilians and soldiers, by taking a band around to serenade General Pershing the first thing in the morning. His house was on the left bank of the Seine, not far from American headquarters in the Rue Constantine, an historic old

place with little stone balconies outside the upper windows.

On one of these General Pershing appeared, with the first notes of the band. He was cheered and cheered again. A little boy who had somehow climbed to the top of a gas street-lamp squealed boastfully to Pershing: "See, I am an American, too, for I have a sky-scraper!" (J'ai un gratte-ciel!) And with a wave of his hand General Pershing acknowledged his compatriot.

It was in this crowd around Pershing's house that a riot started, because a man who was being unpleasantly jostled said: "Oh, do leave me in peace." Those nearest him good-naturedly tried to give him elbow-room, but those a little distance away caught merely the "peace" of his ejaculation and, with sudden loud cries of "kill the pacifist," made for the unfortunate, and pommelled him roundly before the matter could be explained.

After the serenade and General Pershing's little speech of thanks the band, with most of the crowd following, marched over to des Invalides, the appointed place for the formal ceremony.

Around the ancient hotel, overflowing into the broad boulevards that radiate from it, and packing to suffocation the Champs de Mars in front of it, there were just as many Frenchmen as could stand shoulder to shoulder and chin to back. Inside, where there were speeches and exchanges of national emblems, the crowd was equally dense, in spite of the fact that only the very important or the very cunning had cards of admission.

The real Fourth celebration was in the streets. The waiting crowds yelled thunderously when the first band appeared, heralding the parade. Then came the Territorials, the escort troops, in their familiar horizon-blue. Then more bands, then officers, mounted and in motor-cars, and, finally, the Americans, manifestly having the proudest moment of their lives.

They were to march from des Invalides to Picpus Cemetery, the little private cemetery outside of Paris, where the Marquis de Lafayette is buried.

They crossed Solferino bridge, and made their way through a terrific crowd in the broad Place de la Concorde. The Paris newspapers, boast-

ing of their conservatism, said there were easily one million Parisians that day within sight of des Invalides when the American soldiers left the building and started on their march.

To hear the soldiers tell it, there were easily one million Parisians, all under the age of ten, immediately under their feet before they had marched a mile.

From a balcony of the Hotel Crillon, on the north side of the Place de la Concorde, the marching Americans were wholly lost to view from the waist down. Nobody could ever complain of the French birth-rate after seeing that parade. Nobody ever saw that many children before in any one assemblage in France. It was prodigious.

And the French youngsters had their own notions of how they were to take part in that French Fourth of July. The main notion was to walk between the soldiers' legs. They were massed thick beside the soldiers, thick between them, impeding their knee action, terrorizing their steps. At a little distance, they looked like batter in a waffle-pan. But they did what they could to make the American

soldiers feel among friends that day, and nobody could say they failed.

The parade turned along the picturesque old Rue de Rivoli on leaving the Place de la Concorde, and filed along the river, almost the length of the city. They had not gone far before the Frenchwomen had thrown them enough roses to decorate bayonets and hats and a few lapels. They made a brave sight, brave to nobility. And though they were harassed by the eager children, abashed by the women, and touched to genuine emotion by the whole city, they wouldn't have grudged five years of their lives for the privilege of being there.

At Picpus, the scene made up in intensiveness what it lacked in breadth, for the cemetery is far too small to permit of a crowd of size. A home for aged gentlewomen overlooks one wall . . . its windows were filled, and their occupants proved that Frenchwomen are never too old or too gentle to throw roses. A military hospital overlooks another side, and balconies and windows were crowded with "blessés." The few officers and civilians who had access to the cemetery-grounds made their com-

memoration brief and simple. It was there that Colonel Stanton made the little speech which buzzed around the Allied world within the day: "Lafayette, nous voilà!"—"Lafayette, we're here!" Its felicity of phrase moved the French scribes to columns of congratulation. Its compactness won the Americans. Everybody said it was the best war speech made in France, and it was.

After Picpus, the officers came back to the city for work, and the soldiers went to barracks. The sailors were allowed to saunter about the city, in vain search for the post-card ladies and the flying champagne corks. The soldiers were on a sterner régime.

Early on the morning of the 5th, they were eastward bound, to join the rest of the First Division for training, and Paris saw the last of the American soldiers.

A few had leave, within the next few months, from engineering corps and base hospitals. But the infantrymen and the marines were over learning lessons in the war of trench and bayonet, and by Christmas even the scattering leaves from behind the lines were discon-

tinued, and Americans on holiday bent were sent to Aix-les-Bains. Even officers had little or no Paris leave, and those who had been quartered in Paris, in the Rue Constantine and the Rue Sainte-Anne, were collected at the new American headquarters, southeast of Paris. The American uniform all but vanished off the Paris streets. The French national holiday, ten days after the American, had no American contingent.

So Paris and the American Army had a quick acquaintance, a brilliant one and a brief one. It was mainly between the beginning and the end of that Fourth of July. It will quite probably not be renewed till the end of the war. Lucky the onlooker who sees the reunion. For then it may be wagered that there will be gayety enough to answer the needs of even the most post-card-haunted soldier.

But to get on to the training-camps——

CHAPTER V

WHAT THEY LIVED IN

THE American training-camp area spread over many miles and through many villages. It had boundaries only in theory, because all its sides were ready to swing farther north, east, south, and west at a day's notice, whenever the Expeditionary Force should become army enough to require it.

But its focus was in the Vosges, in the six or seven villages set apart from the beginning for the Americans, and as such, overhauled by those first marines and quartermaster's assistants who left the coast in early July and moved campward.

This overhauling brought the end of the Franco-American honeymoon. Later, amity was to be re-established, but when the first marine ordered the first manure-pile out of the first front yard, a breach began which it took long months to heal.

There were few barracks in the Vosges. The soldiers were to be billeted with the peasants. And the marines said the peasants had to clean up and air, and the peasants said the marines were insane.

Those first days at training-camp, before the body of the troops arrived, were circus enough for anybody.

Six villages were to be got ready, the officers to have the pick of places, and the privates to have next best. And the choice of assignments for officers was still so far from ideal as to make the house-cleaning a thorough job all around.

The marines had a village to themselves, the farthest from the inspection-grounds. The correspondents had a village to themselves, too, though it wasn't because there was any excess of regard for the importance of the correspondents among the men who laid out the grounds. They were put where they could do the least harm, and where their confusing appearance, in Sam Brown belts and other officer-like insignia, would not exact too many wasted salutes.

General Headquarters was still in Paris at

this time, but General Sibert had Field Headquarters at camp, and though his assignment was relatively stylish, it could not have been said to offend him with its luxury.

He lived and worked in a little frame building in the main street of the central village, which had probably once been a hotel.

It was to be recognized by the four soldiers always at attention outside it, whenever motors or pedestrians passed that way. Two of the soldiers were American and two were French.

Although all the American training-camp area became America as to jurisdiction, as soon as the troops moved there, the French soldiers were always present around headquarters, partly to help and partly to register politeness.

Inside Field Headquarters, the little bare wooden rooms were stripped of their few battered vases and old chromos, and plain wooden tables and chairs were set about. The marines opened the windows, and scrubbed up the floors, and hung out the sign of "Business as usual," and General Sibert moved in.

The rest was not so easy. The various kitchens came in first for attention. For many

days French and American motor-lorries had been trundling across France, storing the warehouses with heaping piles of food-supplies. The procession practically never stopped. Trains brought what could be put aboard them, but it was to motors that most of the real work fell. So the thin, long line of loaded cars stretched endlessly from coast to camp, and finally everything was attended to but where to put the food and where to cook it.

The houses with the good back sheds were picked for kitchens, and the big army soup-kettles were bricked into place, and what passed for ovens were provided for the bakers.

For bathing facilities, there were neat paths marked to the river. That is, the French called it a river. Every American who rides through France for the first time has the same experience: he looks out of his train-window and remarks to his companion, who knows France well: "Isn't that a pretty little creek? Are there many springs about here?" And the companion replies scornfully: "That isn't a creek—that's the Marne River," or "That's the Aisne," or "That's the Meuse." The

American always wonders what the French would call the Hudson.

It was one of these storied streams that ran through the American training-camp, in which the Americans did their bathing. Whenever a soldier wanted to get his head wet he waded across.

Later, when the camps were filled, these river-banks were to offer a remarkable sight to the French peasants, who thought all Americans were bathing-mad anyway. Hundreds of soldiers, in the assorted postures of men scrubbing backs and knees and elbows, disported with soap and wash-cloth along the banks. Hundreds of others, swimming their suds off, flashed here an arm and there a leg in the stream itself. It did not take much distance to make them look like figures on a frieze, a new Olympic group. Modesty knew them not, but there were not supposed to be women about, and the peasants had a nice Japanese point of view in the matter. At any rate, there was the training-camp bathtub, and they used it at least once a day, to the unending stupefaction of the French.

Where they slept was another matter, suggesting neither Corot nor Phidias.

The privates had houses first, then barns. The barns were freed of the live stock, which was turned into meadows to graze, and the floors were dug down to clean earth, and vast quantities of formaldehyde were sprayed around. Then the cots were carried up to the second floors of the barns and put along in tidy rows. At the foot of each soldier's bed was whatever manner of small wooden box he could corral from the quartermaster, and there he kept all he owned. His pack unfolded its contents into the box, and his comfort-kit perched on the top. And there he kept the little mess of treasures he bought from the gypsy wagons that rode all day around the outskirts of the camp.

Windows were knocked out, just under the eaves, for the fresh air that seemed, so inexplicably to the French, so essential to the Americans.

Even with the First Division, acknowledged to be about the smallest expeditionary force known to the Great War, the soldiers averaged a little over two thousand to the village, and

since not one of the villages had more than four or five hundred population in peace-times, the troubles of the man who arranged the billets were far from light.

Fortunately, the First Division did not ask for luxuries. Even the officers spent more time in simplifying their quarters than in trimming them up. The colonel of one regiment—one of those who became major-generals soon after the arrival in France—had his quarters in an aristocratic old house, set back in a long yard, where plum-trees dropped their red fruit in the vivid green grass and roses overgrew their confines—it was the sort of house before which the pre-war motor tourists used to stop and breathe long "ohs" of satisfaction.

The entrance was by a low, arched doorway. The hall was built of beautifully grained woods, old and mellow of tone. The stairway was broad and easy to climb. The colonel had the second floor front, just level with the tree-tops.

In the room there were rich woods and tapestried walls, and at the back was a four-poster mahogany bed with heavy satin hangings, brocaded with fleur-de-lis. The Pompadour would

have been entirely happy there. But the American colonel had done things to it—things that would have popped the eyes out of the Pompadour's head. He pinned up the four-poster hangings with a safety-pin, that being the only way he could convey to his amiable little French servant-girl that he didn't want that bed turned down for him of nights. And he had taken all the satin hangings down from the windows. Under these windows he had drawn up a little board table and an army cot. Beside the table was his little army trunk. The space he used did not measure more than ten feet in any direction, and his luxuries waited unmolested for some more sybaritic soul than he.

A major in that same village who had had a cavalry command before the cavalry, as he put it, became "mere messengers," picked his quarters out himself, on the strength of all he had heard about "Sunny France." His house was nothing much, but behind it was a garden—a long garden, filled with vegetables, decorated with roses, shaded by fruit-trees. At the far end of the garden was a summer-house, in a circle of trees. Here the major took his first

guests and showed how he intended to do his work in the open air, while the famous French sunshine flooded his garden and warmed his little refuge.

The one thing it will never be safe to say to any veteran of the First Division is "Sunny France." The summer of 1917, after a blazing start in June, settled down to drizzle and mist, cold and fog, rain that soaked to the marrow.

The major with the garden sloshed around the whole summer, visiting men who had settled indoors and had fireplaces. By the time the warmth had come back to his summer-house it was time for him to go up to the battle-line, and the man who writes a history of the billets in France will get a lot of help from him.

Some of the makeshifts of this first invasion were excusable and inevitable. Some were not. After the first two or three weeks of settling in, General Pershing made a tour of inspection, and some of the things he said about what he saw didn't make good listening. But after that visit all possible defects were overcome, and the men slept well, ate well, were as well clothed as possible, and were admirably sanitated.

The drinking-water was a matter for the greatest strictness. The French never drink water on any provocation, so that water provisions began from the ground up.

It was drawn into great skins and hung on tripods in the shaded parts of the billets, and it was then treated with a germicide, tasteless fortunately, carried in little glass capsules. This was a legacy from experiences in Panama.

Each man had his own tin cup, and when he got thirsty he went down and turned the faucet in the hanging skin tank. If he drank any other water he repented in the guard-house.

So, though the billets were rude and sometimes uncomfortable, the soldiers did stay in them and out of the hospitals.

And there were compensations.

Half of these were in play-times, and half in work-times. The training, slow at first, speeded up afterward and, with the help of the "Blue Devils" who trained with the Americans, took on all the exhilaration of war with none of its dangers. But how they trained doesn't belong in a chapter on billets. How they played is more suitable.

Three-fourths of their playing they did with the French children. The insurmountable French language, which kept doughboys and poilus at arm's length in spite of their best intentions, broke down with the youngsters.

It was one of the finest sights around the camp to see the big soldiers collecting around the mess-tent after supper, in the daylight-saving long twilight, to hear the band and play in pantomime with the hundreds of children who tagged constantly after them.

The band concerts were a regular evening affair, though musically they didn't come to much. Those were the days before anybody had thought to supply the army bands with new music, so "She's My Daisy" and "The Washington Post" made a daily appearance.

But the concerts did not want for attendance. The soldiers stood around by the hundreds, and listened and looked off over the hills to where the guns were rumbling, whenever the children were not exacting too much attention.

This child-soldier combination had just two words. The child said "Hello," which was all

his English, and the party lasted till the soldier, billet-bound, said "Fee-neesh," which was all his French. But nobody could deny that both of them had a good time.

Letter-writing was another favorite sport with the First Division, to the great dole of the censors. Of course the men were homesick. That was one reason. The other was that they had left home as heroes, and they didn't intend to let the glory lapse merely because they had come across to France and been slapped into school. The censors were astounded by what they read . . . gory battles of the day before, terrific air-raids, bombardments of camp, etc. Some of the men told how they had slaughtered Germans with their bare hands. Most of the letters were adjudged harmless, and of little aid or comfort to the enemy, so they were passed through. But some of the families of the First Division must have thought that the War Department was holding out an awful lot on the American public.

Mid-July saw the camp in fair working order. The First Division had word that it was presently to be joined by the New England Division

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Buglers of the Alpine Chasseurs, assisted by their military band, entertaining American soldiers of the First Division.

and the Rainbow Division, both National Guardsmen, and representative of every State.

American participation began to take shape as a real factor, a stern and sombre business, and all the lighter, easier sides of the expedition began to fall back, and work and grimness came on together.

The French Alpine Chasseurs—whom the Americans promptly called "chasers"—had a party with the Americans on July 14, when the whole day was given over to a picnic, with boxing, wrestling, track sports, and a lot of food. That was the last party in the training-camp till Christmas.

The work that began then had no let-up till the first three battalions went into the trenches late in October. The steadily increasing number of men widened the area of the training-camp, but they made no difference in the contents of the working-day, nor in the system by which it proceeded.

Within the three weeks after the First Division had landed, the work of army-building began.

CHAPTER VI

GETTING THEIR STRIDE

THAT part of France which became America in July, 1917, was of about the shape of a long-handled tennis-racket. The broad oval was lying just behind the fighting-lines. The handle reached back to the sea. Then, to the ruin of the simile, the artillery-schools, the aviation-fields, and the base hospitals made excrescences on the handle, so that an apter symbol would be a large and unshapely string of beads.

But France lends itself to pretty exact plotting out. There are no lakes or mountains to dodge, nor particularly big cities to edge over to. In the main, the organizing staffs of the two nations could draw lines from the coast to the battle-fields, and say: "Between these two shall America have her habitation and her name."

The infantry trained in the Vosges. The artillery-ranges were next behind, and then the

aviation-grounds. The hospitals were placed everywhere along the lines, from field-bases to those far in the rear. And because neither French train service nor Franco-American motor service could bear the giant burden of man-and-supply transportation, the first job to which the engineer and labor units were assigned was laying road-beds across France for a four-track railroad within the American lines.

In those days America did not look forward to the emergency which was to brigade her troops with French or British, under Allied Generalissimo Foch. Her plans were to put in a force which should be, as the English say of their flats, "self-contained." If this arrangement had a fault, it was that it was too leisurely. It was certainly not lacking on the side of magnificence, either in concept or carrying-out.

The scheme of bringing not only army but base of supplies, both proportionate to a nation of a hundred million people, was necessarily begun from the ground up. The American Army built railroads and warehouses as a matter of course. It laid out training-camps for the various arms of the service on an unheard-of

scale. As it happens, the original American plan was changed by the force of circumstances. Much of the American man-power eventually was brigaded with the British and French and went through the British and French soldier-making mills. But the territory marked America still remains America and the excellent showing made by the War Department in shipping men during the spring and early summer of 1918 furnished a supply of soldiers sufficient to make allotments to the Allies directly and at the same time preserve a considerable force as a distinctly American Army. It is possible that the fastest method of preparation possible might have been to brigade with the Allies from the beginning. But it would have been difficult to induce America to accept such a plan if it had not been for the emergency created by the great German drive of the spring of 1918.

American engineers were both building railroads and running them from July on. The hospital units were installed even earlier. The first work of an army comes behind the lines and a large proportion of the early arrivals of the A. E. F. were non-fighting units. At that

there was no satisfying the early demands for labor. As late as mid-August General Pershing was still doing the military equivalent of tearing his hair for more labor units and stevedores. A small number of negroes employed as civilian stevedores came with the First Division, but they could not begin to fill the needs. Later all the stevedores sent were regularly enlisted members of the army. While the great undertaking was still on paper and the tips of tongues, the infantry was beginning its hard lessons in the Vosges. The First Division was made up of something less than 50 per cent of experienced soldiers, although it was a regular army division. The leaven of learning was too scant. The rookies were all potentiality. The training was done with French soldiers and for the first little while under French officers. A division of Chasseurs Alpines was withdrawn from the line to act as instructors for the Americans, and for two months the armies worked side by side. "You will have the honor," so the French order read, "of spending your permission in training the American troops." This might not seem like

the pleasantest of all possible vacations for men from the line, but the chasseurs seemed to take to it readily enough. These Chasseurs Alpines—the Blue Devils—were the finest troops the French had. And if they were to give their American guests some sound instruction later on, they were to give them the surprise of their lives first.

The French officer is the most dazzling sight alive, but the French soldier is not. Five feet of height is regarded as an abundance. He got his name of "poilu" not so much from his beard as from his perpetual little black mustache.

The doughboys called him "Froggy" with ever so definite a sense of condescension.

"Yes, they look like nothing—but you try following them for half a day," said an American officer of the "poilus."

They have a short, choppy stride, far different to the gangling gait of the American soldier. The observer who looks them over and decides they would be piffling on the march, forgets to see that they have the width of an opera-singer under the arms, and that they no more get

winded on their terrific sprints than Caruso does on his high C's.

And after they had done some stunts with lifting guns by the bayonet tip, and had heaved bombs by the afternoon, the doughboys called in their old opinions and got some new ones.

All sorts of things were helping along the international liking and respect. The prowess of the French soldiers was one of the most important. But the soldiers' interpretation of Pershing's first general order to the troops was another. This order ran:

"For the first time in history an American Army finds itself in European territory. The good name of the United States of America and the maintenance of cordial relations require the perfect deportment of each member of this command. It is of the gravest importance that the soldiers of the American Army shall at all times treat the French people, and especially the women, with the greatest courtesy and consideration. The valiant deeds of the French Army and the Allies, by which together they have successfully maintained the common cause for three years, and the sacrifices of the civil

population of France in support of their armies, command our profound respect. This can best be expressed on the part of our forces by uniform courtesies to all the French people, and by the faithful observance of their laws and customs. The intense cultivation of the soil in France, under conditions caused by the war, makes it necessary that extreme care should be taken to do no damage to private property. The entire French manhood capable of bearing arms is in the field fighting the enemy, and it should, therefore, be a point of honor to each member of the American Army to avoid doing the least damage to any property in France."

Veteran soldiers take a general order as a general order, following it literally. Recruits on a mission such as the First Division's took that first general order as a sort of intimation, on which they were to build their own conceptions of gallantry and good-will. Not only did they avoid doing damage to French property, they minded the babies, drew the well-water, carried faggots, peeled potatoes—did anything and everything they found a Frenchwoman doing, if they had some off time.

They fed the children from their own mess, kept them behind the lines at grenade practice, mended their toys and made them new ones.

These things cemented the international friendliness that the statesmen of the two countries had made so much talk of. And by the time the war training was to begin, doughboys and Blue Devils tramped over the long white roads together with nothing more unfriendly left between them than rivalry.

The first thing they were set to do was trench-digging. The Vosges boast splendid meadows. The Americans were told to dig themselves in. The method of training with the French was to mark a line where the trench should be, put the French at one end and the Americans at the other. Then they were to dig toward each other as if the devil was after them, and compare progress when they met.

Trench-digging is every army's prize abomination. A good hate for the trenches was the first step of the Americans toward becoming professional. It was said of the Canadians early in the war that though they would die in the last ditch they wouldn't dig it.

No army but the German ever attempted to make its trenches neat and cosey homes, but even the hasty gully required by the French seemed an obnoxious burden to the doughboy. The first marines who dug a trench with the Blue Devils found that their picks struck a stone at every other blow, and that by the time they had dug deep enough to conceal their length they were almost too exhausted to climb out again.

The ten days given over to trench-digging was not so much because the technic was intricate or the method difficult to learn. They were to break the spirit of the soldiers and hammer down their conviction that they would rather be shot in the open than dig a trench to hide in. They were also to keep the aching backs and weary shoulders from getting overstiff. Toward the end of July the first batch of infantrymen were called off their trenches and were started at bomb practice. At first they used dummy bombs. The little line of Blue Devils who were to start the party picked up their bombs, swung their arms slowly overhead, held them straight from wrist

to shoulder, and let their bombs sail easily up on a long, gentle arc, which presently landed them in the practice trenches.

"One—two—three—four," they counted, and away went the bombs. The doughboys laughed. It seemed to them a throw fit only for a woman or a substitute third baseman in the Texas League. When their turn came, the doughboys showed the Blue Devils the right way to throw a bomb. They lined them out with a ton of energy behind each throw, and the bombs went shooting straight through the air, level above the trench-lines, and a distance possibly twice as far as that attained by the Frenchmen. They stood back waiting for the applause that did not come.

"The objects are two in bomb-throwing, and you did not make either," said the French instructor. "You must land your bomb in the trenches—they do no more harm than wind when they fly straight—and you must save your arm so that you can throw all afternoon."

So the baseball throw was frowned out, and the half-womanish, half-cricket throw was brought in.

After the doughboys had mastered their method they were put to getting somewhere with it. They were given trenches first at ten metres' distance, and then at twenty. Then there were competitions, and war training borrowed some of the fun of a track meet. The French had odds on. No army has ever equalled them for accuracy of bomb-throwing, and the doughboys, once pried loose from their baseball advantage, were not in a position to push the French for their laurels. The American Army's respect for the French began to have growing-pains. But what with driving hard work, the doughboys learned finally to land a dummy bomb so that it didn't disgrace them.

With early August came the live grenades, and the first serious defect in the American's natural aptitude for war-making was turned up. This defect had the pleasant quality of being sentimentally correct, even if sharply reprehensible from the French point of view. It was, in brief, that the soldiers had no sense of danger, and resisted all efforts to implant one, partly from sheer lack of imagination in training, and partly from a scorn of taking to cover.

The live bombs were hurled from deep trenches, aimed not at a point, but at a distance —any distance, so it was safe. But once the bombs were thrown, every other doughboy would straighten up in his trench to see what he had hit. Faces were nipped time and again by the fragments of flying steel, and the French heaped admonitions on admonitions, but it was long before the American soldiers would take their war-game seriously.

Later, in the mass attacks on "enemy trenches," when they were ordered to duck on the grass to avoid the bullets, the doughboys ducked as they were told, then popped up at once on one elbow to see what they could see. The Blue Devils training with them lay like prone statues. The doughboys looked at them in astonishment, and said, openly and frequently: "But there ain't any bullets."

It was finally from the British, who came later as instructors, that the doughboys accepted it as gospel that they must be pragmatic about the dangers, and "act as if . . ." Then some of the wiseacres at the camp pronounced the conviction that the Americans thought the

French were melodramatic, and by no means to be copied, until they found their British first cousins, surely above reproach for needless emotionalism, were doing the same strange things.

The state of mind into which Allied instructors sought to drive or coax the Americans was pinned into a sharp phrase by a Far Western enlisted man before he left his own country. A melancholy relative had said, as he departed: "Are you ready to give your life to your country?" To which the soldier answered: "You bet your neck I'm not—I'm going to make some German give his life for his."

This was representative enough of the sentiments of the doughboys, but the instructors ran afoul of their deepest convictions when they insisted that this was an art to be learned, not a mere preference to be favored.

After the live bombs came the first lessons in machine-gun fire, using the French machine-gun and automatic rifle. The soldiers were taught to take both weapons apart and put them together again, and then they were ordered to fire them.

The first trooper to tackle an automatic rifle aimed the little monster from the trenches, and opened fire, but he found to his discomfiture that he had sprayed the hilltops instead of the range, and one of the officers of the Blue Devils told him he would better be careful or he would be transferred to the anti-aircraft service.

The veterans of the army, however, had little trouble with the automatic rifle or the machine-guns, even at first. The target was 200 metres away, at the foot of a hill, and the first of the sergeants to tackle it made 30 hits out of a possible 34.

The average for the army fell short of this, but the men were kept at it till they were thoroughly proficient.

One characteristic of all the training of the early days at camp was that both officers and men were being prepared to train later troops in their turn, so that many lectures in war theory and science, and many demonstrations of both, were included there. This accounted for much of the additional time required to train the First Division.

But while their own training was unusually

long drawn out, they were being schooled in the most intensive methods in use in either French or British Army. It was an unending matter for disgust to the doughboy that it took him so long to learn to hurry.

CHAPTER VII

SPEEDING UP

WHILE the soldiers were still, figuratively speaking, in their own trenches and learning the several arts of getting out, the officers of the infantry camp were having some special instructions in instructing.

Young captains and lieutenants were placed in command of companies of the Blue Devils, and told to put them through their paces—in French.

It was, of course, a point of honor with the officers not to fall back into English, even in an emergency. One particularly nervous young man, who had ordered his French platoon to march to a cliff some distance away, forgot the word for "Halt" or "Turn around" as the disciplined Blue Devils, eyes straight ahead, marched firmly down upon their doom. At the very edge, while the American clinched his sticky palms and wondered what miracle would

save him, a helpful French officer called "Halte," and the American suddenly remembered that the word was the same in both languages—an experience revoltingly frequent with Americans in distress with their French.

But disasters such as this were not numerous. The officers worked excellently, at French as well as soldiering, and little precious time was needed for them.

Three battalions were at work at this first training—two American and one French. As these learned their lessons, they were put forward to the next ones, and new troops began at the beginning. This plan was thoroughly organized at the very beginning, so that the later enormous influx of troops did not disrupt it, and as the first Americans came nearer to the perfection they were after, they were put back to leaven the raw troops as the French Blue Devils had done for the first of them.

The plan further meant that after the first few weeks, what with beginners in the First Division and newly arriving troops, the Vosges fields offered instruction at almost anything along the programme on any given day.

Over the whole camp, the aim of the French officers was to reproduce actual battle conditions as absolutely as possible, and to eliminate, within reason, any advantage that surprise might give to the Germans.

By the end of the first week in August, the best scholars among the trench-diggers and bombers were being shown how to clean out trenches with live grenades, and the machine-gunners and marksmen were getting good enough to be willing to bet their own money on their performances.

Then came the battalion problems, the proper use of grenades by men advancing in formations against a mythical enemy in intrenched positions.

From the beginning, the American Army refused to accept the theory that the war would never again get into the open. They trained in open warfare, and with a far greater zest—partly, of course, because it was the thing they knew already, though they found they had some things to unlearn.

Then the war brought about a reorganization of American army units, and it was necessary

for the officers to familiarize themselves with new conditions. The reorganization was ordered early in August, and put into effect shortly afterward. The request from General Pershing that the administrative units of the infantry be altered to conform with European systems had in its favor the fact that it economized higher officers and regimental staffs, for at the same time that divisions were made smaller, regiments were made larger.

The new arrangement of the infantry called for a company of 250 enlisted men and 6 commissioned officers, instead of 100 men and 3 officers. Each company was then divided into 4 platoons, with a lieutenant in command. Each regiment was made up of 3 battalions of 4 companies each, supplemented by regimental headquarters and the supply and machine-gun organizations.

This made it possible to have 1 colonel and 3 battalion commanders officer 3,600 men, as against 2,000 of the old order.

This army in the making was not called on to show itself in the mass till August 16, just a month after its hard work had begun. Then

Major-General Sibert, field-commander of the First Division and best-loved man in France, held a review of all the troops. The manœuvres were held in a great open plain. The marching was done to spirited bands, who had to offset a driving rain-storm to keep the men perked up. The physical exercise of the first month showed in the carriage of the men, infinitely improved, and they marched admirably, in spite of the fact that their first training had been a specialization in technical trench warfare. General Sibert made them a short address of undiluted praise, and they went back to work again.

A few days later the army had its first intelligence drill, with the result that some erstwhile soldiers were told off to cook and tend mules.

The test consisted in delivering oral messages. One message was: "Major Blank sends his compliments to Captain Nameless, and orders him to move L Company one-half mile to the east, and support K Company in the attack." The officer who gave the message then moved up the hill and prepared to receive it.

The third man up came in panting excite-

ment, full of earnest desire to do well. "Captain, the major says that you're to move your men a mile to the east," he said, "and attack K Company." He peeled the potatoes for supper.

The gas tests came late in August. The officers, believing that fear of gas could not be excessive, had done some tall talking before the masks were given out, and in the first test, when the men were to enter a gas-filled chamber with their masks on, they had all been assured that one whiff would be fatal. The gas in the chamber was of the tear-compelling kind, only temporarily harmful, even on exposure to it. But that was a secret.

The men were drilled in putting their masks on, till the worst of them could do it in from three to five seconds. Both the French and the British masks were used, the one much lighter but comparatively riskier than the other. Officers required the men to have their masks constantly within reach, and gas alarms used to be called at meal-times, or whenever it seemed thoroughly inconvenient to have them. The soldiers were required to drop everything

and don the cumbersome contrivances, no matter how well they knew that there wasn't any gas. There is no question that this thoroughness saved many lives when the men went into the trenches.

When they masked and went into the gas-chamber the care they took with straps and buckles could not have been bettered. One or two of the men fainted from heat and nervousness, but nobody caught the temporary blindness that would have been their lot if the gas had not been held off. And after the first few entrants had returned none the worse, the rest made a lark of it, and the whole experience stamped on their minds the uselessness of gas as a weapon if you're handy with the mask.

The first insistence on rifle use and marksmanship, which General Pershing was to stress later with all the eloquence he had, was heard in late August. The French said frankly they had neglected the power of the rifle, and the Americans were put to work to avoid the same mistake. In target-shooting with rifles the Americans got their first taste of supremacy. They ceased being novitiates for as long as they

held their rifles, and became respected and admired experts. The first English Army, "the Old Contemptibles," had all been expert rifle-shots, and, after a period when rifle fire was almost entirely absent from the battle-fields, tacticians began to recall this fact, and the cost it had entailed upon the Germans.

So the doughboys added rifle fire to their other jobs.

About this time the day of the doughboy was a pattern of compactness, though he called it a harsher name.

It began in the training area at five o'clock in the morning. One regiment had a story that some of the farm lads used to beat the buglers up every day and wander about disconsolate, wondering why the morning was being wasted. This was probably fictional. As a rule, five o'clock came all too early. There was little opportunity to roll over and have another wink, for roll-call came at five-thirty, and this was followed by brief setting-up exercises, designed to give the men an ambition for breakfast. At this meal French customs were not popular. The poilu, who begins his day with black coffee

and a little bread, was always amazed to see the American soldier engaged with griddle-cakes and corned-beef hash, and such other substantial things as he could get at daybreak. Just after breakfast sick-call was sounded. It was up to the ailing man to report at that time as a sufferer or forever after hold his peace. While the sick were engaged in reporting themselves the healthy men tidied up. Work proper began at seven.

As a rule, bombing, machine-gun, and automatic-rifle fire practice came in the mornings. Time was called at eleven and the soldiers marched back to billets for the midday meal. Later, when the work piled up even more, the meals were prepared on the training-grounds. Rifle and bayonet practice came in the afternoon. Four o'clock marked the end of the working-day for all except captains and lieutenants, who never found any free time in waking hours. In fact, most of the excited youngsters—almost all under thirty—let their problems perturb their dreams. The doughboys amused themselves with swims, walks, concerts, supper, and French children till nine

o'clock, when they were always amiable toward going to bed.

With September came the British to supplement the French and, after a little, to go far toward replacing them. For the Blue Devils had still work to do on the Germans, and their "vacation" could not last too long.

A fine and spectacular sham battle put a climax to the stay of the French, when, after artillery preparation, the Blue Devils took the newly made American trenches, advancing under heavy barrage. The three objectives were named Mackensen, Von Kluck, and Ludendorff. The artillery turned everything it had into the slow-moving screen, under which the "chasers" crept toward the foe. All the watching doughboys had been instructed to put on their shrapnel helmets. At the pitch of the battle some officers found their men using their helmets as good front seats for the show, but fortunately there were no casualties. Words do not kill.

The departure of the Blue Devils was attended by a good deal of home-made ceremony and a universal deep regret. A genuine liking

had sprung up between the Americans and their French preceptors, and when they marched away from camp the soldiers flung over them what detachable trophies they had, the strains of all their bands, the unified good wishes of the whole First Division, and unnumbered promises to be a credit to their teachers when they got into the line.

It was the bayonet which proved the first connecting-link between the Americans and the British. American observers had decided after a few weeks that the bayonet was a peculiarly British weapon, and in consequence it was decided that for this phase of the training, the army should rely on the British rather than the French.

The British General Staff obligingly supplied the chief bayonet instructor of their army with a number of assisting sergeants, and the squad was sent down to camp.

The British brought two important things, in addition to expert bayoneting. They were, first, a familiar bluntness of criticism, which the Americans had rather missed with the polite French, and a competitive spirit, stirred up

wherever possible between rival units of the A. E. F.

Their willingness to "act" their practice was another factor, though in that they did not excel the French except in that they could impart it to the Americans.

The British theory of bayonet work proved to be almost wholly offensive. They went at their instruction of it with undimmed fire. At the end of the first week, they gave a demonstration to some visiting officers. Three short trenches had been constructed in a little dip of land, and the spectators stood on the hill above them. On the opposite slope tin cans shone brightly, hoisted on sticks.

"Ready, gentlemen," said the drill-sergeant. "Prepare for trench bayonet practice by half sections. You're to take these three lines of trenches, lay out every Boche in the lot, and then get to cover and fire six rounds at them 'ere tin hats. Don't waste a shot, gentlemen, every bullet a Boche. Now, then, ready—over the top, and give 'em 'ell, right in the stomach."

Over the top they went and did as they were told. But the excitement was not great enough

to please the drill-sergeant. He turned to the second section, and put them through at a rounder pace. Then he took over some young officers, who were being instructed to train later troops, at cleaning out trenches. Sacks representing Germans were placed in a communicating trench.

"Now, remember, gentlemen," said the sergeant, "there's a Fritz in each one of these 'ere cubby-'oles, and 'e's no dub, is Fritz. 'E's got ears all down 'is back. Make your feet pneumatic. For 'eaven's sake, don't sneeze, or 'is nibs will sling you a bomb like winkin', and there'll be a narsty mess. Ready, Number One! 'Ead down, bayonet up . . . it's no use stickin' out your neck to get a sight of Fritzie in 'is 'ole. Why, if old Fritz was there, 'e'd just down your point, and then where'd you be? Why, just a blinkin' casualty, and don't you forget it. Ready again, bayonet up. Now you see 'em. Quick, down with your point and at 'im. Tickle 'is gizzard. Not so bad, but I bet you waked 'is nibs in the next 'ole. Keep in mind you're fightin' for your life. . . ."

By the time the officers were into the trench, the excitement was terrific.

It was such measures as these that made the bayonet work go like lightning, and cut down the time required at it by more than one-half.

The organized recreation and the competitions, two sturdy British expedients for morale, always came just after these grimmest of all of war's practices. The more foolish the game, the more rapturously the British joined in it. Red Rover and prisoner's base were two prime favorites. A British major said the British Army had discovered that when the men came out of the trenches, fagged and horror-struck, the surest way to bring them back was to set them hard at playing some game remembered from their childhood.

The British had even harder work, at first, to make the men fall in with the games than they had with war practice. But the friendly spirit existing basically between English and Americans, however spatty their exterior relationships may sometimes be, finally got everybody in together. The Americans found that a British instructor would as lief call them "rotten" if he thought they deserved it, but that

he did it so simply and inoffensively that it was, on the whole, very welcome.

So the Americans learned all they could from French and British, and began the scheme of turning back on themselves, and doing their own instructing.

The infantry camp was destined to have some offshoots, as the number of men grew larger, and the specialists required intensive work. Officers' schools sprang up all over France, and all the supplemental forces, which had infantry training at first, scattered off to their special training, notably the men trained to throw gas and liquid fire.

But, for the most part, the camp in the Vosges remained the big central mill it was designed to be, and in late October, when three battalions put on their finishing touches in the very battle-line, the cycle was complete. Before the time when General Pershing offered the Expeditionary Force to Generalissimo Foch, to put where he chose, the giant treadway from sea to camp and from camp to battle was grinding in monster rhythms. It never thereafter feared any influx of its raw material.

CHAPTER VIII

BACK WITH THE BIG GUNS

THE American Expeditionary Force which went into the great training-schools of France and England was like nothing so much as a child who, having long been tutored in a programme of his own make, an abundance of what he liked and nothing of what he didn't, should be thrust into some grade of a public school. He would be ridiculously advanced in mathematics and a dunce at grammar, or historian to his finger-tips and ignorant that two and two make four. He would amaze his fellow pupils in each respect equally.

And that was the lot of the Expeditionary Force. The French found them backward in trench work and bombing, and naturally enough expected that backwardness to follow through. They conceded the natural quickness of the pupils, but saw a long road ahead before they could become an army. Then the Americans tackled artillery, hardest and deepest of the

war problems, and suddenly blossomed out as experts.

Of course, the analogy is not to be leaned on too heavily. The Americans were not, on the instant, the arch-exponents of artillery in all Europe. But it is true that in comparison to the size of their army, and to the extent to which they had prepared nationally for war, their artillery was stronger than that of any other country on the Allied side at the beginning of the war, notwithstanding that it was the point where they might legitimately have been expected to be the weakest.

Hilaire Belloc called the American artillery preparation one of the most dramatic and welcome surprises of the war.

It must be understood that all this applies only to men and not in the least to guns. For big guns, the American reliance was wholly upon France and England, upon the invitation of those two countries when America entered the war.

And the readiness of America's men was not due to a large preparation in artillery as such. The blessing arose from the fact that the coast

defense could be diverted, within the first year of war, to the handling of the big guns for land armies, and thus strengthen the artillery arm sent to France for final training.

Artillery was every country's problem, even in peace-times. It was the service which required the greatest wealth and the most profound training. There was no such thing as a citizenry trained to artillery. Mathematics was its stronghold, and no smattering could be made to do. Even more than mathematics was the facility of handling the big guns when mathematics went askew from special conditions.

These things the coast defense had, if not in final perfection, at least in creditable degree. And the diversion of it to the artillery in France stiffened the backbone of the Expeditionary Force to the pride of the force and the glad amazement of its preceptors.

One other thing the coast defense had done: it had pre-empted the greater part of America's attention in times of peace and unpreparedness, so that big-gun problems had received a disproportionate amount of study. The Ameri-

can technical journals on artillery were always of the finest. The war services were honeycombed with men who were big-gun experts.

So when the first artillery training-school opened in France, in mid-August of 1917, the problems to be faced were all of a more or less external character.

The first of these, of course, was airplane work. The second was in mastering gun differences between American and French types, and in learning about the enormous numbers of new weapons which had sprung from battle almost day by day.

The camp, when the Americans moved in, had much to recommend it to its new inhabitants. There need be no attempt to conceal the fact that first satisfaction came with the barracks, second with the weather, and only third with the guns and planes.

Some of the artillerymen had come from the infantry camps, and some direct from the coast. Those from the Vosges camp were boisterous in their praise of their quarters. They had brick barracks, with floors, and where they were billeted with the French they found excel-

lent quarters in the old, low-lying stone and brick houses. The weather would not have been admired by any outsider. But to the men from the Vosges it owed a reputation, because they extolled it both day and night. The artillery camp was in open country, to permit of the long ranges, and if it sunned little enough, neither did it rain.

The guns and airplanes supplied by the French were simple at first, becoming, as to guns at least, steadily more numerous and complicated as the training went on.

The men began on the seventy-fives, approximately the American three-inch gun, and on the howitzers of twice that size.

The airplane service was the only part of the work wholly new to the men, and, naturally enough, it was the most attractive.

Although the officers and instructors warned that air observation and range-finding was by far the most dangerous of all artillery service, seventy-five per cent of the young officers who were eligible for the work volunteered for it. This required a two-thirds weeding out, and insured the very pick of men for the air crews.

The air service with artillery was made over almost entirely by the French between the time of the war's beginning and America's entrance. All the old visual aids were abolished, such as smoke-pointers and rockets, and the telephone and wireless were installed in their stead. The observation-balloons had the telephone service, and the planes had wireless.

By these means the guns were first fired and then reported on. The general system of range-finding was: "First fire long, then fire short, then split the bracket." This was the joint job of planes and gunners—one not to be despised as a feat.

In fact, artillery is, of all services, the one most dependent on co-operation. It is always a joint job, but the joining must be done among many factors.

Its effectiveness depends first upon the precision of the mathematical calculation which goes before the pull of the lanyard. This calculation is complicated by the variety of types of guns and shells, and, in the case of howitzers, by the variable behavior of charges of different size and power. But these are things that can

be learned with patience, and require knowledge rather than inspiration.

It is when the air service enters that inspiration enters with it. Observation must be accurate, in spite of weather, visibility, enemy camouflage, and everything else. More than that, the observer in the plane must keep himself safe—often a matter of sheer genius.

The map-maker must do his part, so that targets not so elusive as field-guns and motor-emplacements can be found without much help from the air.

Finally, the artillery depends, even more than any other branch of the service, on the rapidity with which its wants can be filled from the rear. The mobility of the big pieces, and their constant connections with ammunition-stores, are matters depending directly on the training of the artillerymen.

These, then, were the things in which the Americans were either tested or trained. Their mathematics were A1, as has been noted, and their familiarity with existing models of big guns sufficient to enable them to pick up the new types without long effort.

They had a few weeks of heavy going with pad and pencil, then they were led to the giant stores of French ammunition—more than any of them had ever seen before—and told to open fire. One dramatic touch exacted by the French instructors was that the guns should be pointed toward Germany, no matter how impotent their distance made them.

Long lanes, up to 12,000 metres, were told off for the ranges. The training was intensive, because at that time there was a half-plan to put the artillery first into the battle-line. In any case it is easier to make time on secondary problems than on primary.

Throughout September, while the artillerymen grew in numbers as well as proficiency, the mastering of gun types was perfected, and the theory of aim was worked out on paper.

Late in the month the French added more guns, chief among them being a monster mounted on railway-trucks whose projectile weighed 1,800 pounds. The artillerymen named her "Mosquito," "because she had a sting," although she had served for 300 charges at Verdun. It was not long before every type of gun in

the French Army, and many from the British, were lined up in the artillery camp, being expertly pulled apart and reassembled.

By the time the artillery went into battle with the infantry, failing in their intention to go first alone, but nevertheless first in actual fighting, they were able to give a fine account of themselves. By the time they had got back to camp and were training new troops from their own experience, they were the centre of an extraordinary organization.

The rolling of men from camp to battle and back again, training, retraining, and fighting in the circle, with an increasing number of men able to remain in the line, and a constantly increasing number of new men permitted to come in at the beginning, ground out an admirable system before the old year was out.

The fact that the artillery-school could not take its material raw did not make the hitches it otherwise would, chiefly, of course, because of the coast defense, and somewhat because American college men were found to have a fine substratum of technical knowledge which artillery could turn to account.

After all the routine was fairly learned, and there had been a helpful interim in the line, the artillery practised on some specialties, partly of their own contribution, and partly those suggested by the other armies.

One of these, the most picturesque, was the shattering of the "pill-boxes," German inventions for staying in No Man's Land without being hit.

A "pill-box" is a tiny concrete fortress, set up in front of the trenches, usually in groups of fifteen to twenty. They have slot-like apertures, through which Germans do their sniping. They are supposed to be immune from anything except direct hit by a huge shell. But the American artillery camp worked out a way of getting them—with luck. Each aperture, through which the German inmates sighted and shot, was put under fire from automatic rifles, coming from several directions at once, so that it was indiscreet for the Boche to stay near his windows, on any slant he could devise. Under cover of this rifle barrage, bombers crept forward, and at a signal the rifle fire stopped, and the bombers threw their destruction in.

All these accomplishments, which did not take overlong to learn, enhanced the natural value of the American artilleryman. He became, in a short time, the pride of the army and a warmly welcomed mainstay to the Allies.

Major-General Peyton C. March, who took the artillery to France and commanded them in their days of organization, before he was called back to be Chief of Staff at Washington, was always credited, by his men, with being three-fourths of the reason why they made such a showing. General March always credited the matter to his men. At any rate, between them they put their country's best foot foremost for the first year of America in France, and they served as optimism centres even when distress over other delays threatened the stoutest hearts.

CHAPTER IX

THE EYES OF THE ARMY

AMERICA'S beginnings in the air service were pretty closely kin to her other beginnings—she furnished the men and took over the apparatus. And although by September 1, 1917, she had large numbers of aviators in the making in France, they were flying—or aspiring to—in French schools, under American supervision, with French machines and French instructors.

There existed, in prospect, and already in detailed design, several enormous flying-fields, to be built and equipped by America, as well as half a dozen big repair-shops, and one gigantic combination repair-shop, assembling-shop, and manufacturing plant.

But in the autumn, when there were aviators waiting in France to go up that very day, there was no waiting on fields trimmed by America.

When the main school, under American super-

vision, had filled to overflowing, the remaining probationers were scattered among the French schools under French supervision. Meanwhile, the engineers and stevedores shared the work of constructing "the largest aviation-field in the world" in central France.

It was once true of complete armies that they could be trained to warfare in their own home fields, and then sent to whatever part of the world happened to be in dispute, and they required no more additional furbishing up than a short rest from the journey. That is no longer true of anything about an army except the air service, and it isn't literally true of them. But they approach it.

So it was practicable to give the American aviators nine-tenths of their training at home, and leave the merest frills to a few spare days in France. This, of course, takes no account of the first weeks at the battle-front, which are only nominally training, since in the course of them a flier may well have to battle for his life, and often does catch a German, if he chances on one as untutored as himself.

The French estimate of the necessary time to

make an aviator is about four months before he goes up on the line, and about four months in patrol, on the line, before he is a thoroughly capable handler of a battle-plane. They cap that by saying that an aviator is born, not made, anyway, and that "all generalizations about them are untrue, including this one."

The air policy of France, however, was in a state of great fluidity at this time. They were not prepared to lay down the law, because they were in the very act of giving up their own romantic, adventurous system of single-man combat, and were borrowing the German system of squadron formation. They were reluctant enough to accept it, let alone acknowledge their debt to the Germans. But the old knight-errantry of the air could not hold up against the new mass attacks. And the French are nothing if not practical.

Even their early war aviators had prudence dinned into them—that prudence which does not mean a niggardliness of fighting spirit, but rather an abstaining from foolhardiness.

Each aviator was warned that if he lost his life before he had to, he was not only squander-

ing his own greatest treasure, but he was leaving one man less for France.

This was the philosophy of the training-school. If the French were impatient with a flier who lost his life to the Germans through excess of friskiness, they were doubly so at the flier who endangered his life at school through heedlessness.

"If you pull the wrong lever," they said, "you will kill a man and wreck a machine. Your country cannot afford to pay, either, for your fool mistakes."

But there their dogma ended. Once the flier had learned to handle his machine, his further behavior was in the hands of American officers solely, and these, he found, were stored with several very definite ideas.

The first of these—the most marked distinction between the French system and the American—was that all American aviators should know the theories of flying and most of its mathematics.

Concerning these things the French cared not a hang.

Neither did the American aviators. But

they toed the mark just the same, and many a youngster gnawed his pencil indoors and cursed the fate that had placed him with a country so finicky about air-currents on paper and so indifferent to the joys of learning by ear.

The Americans accepted from the beginning the edict on squadron flying. It was as much a part of their training as field-manœuvres for the infantry. And because they had no golden days of derring-do to look back upon, they did less grumbling. Besides, there was always the chance of getting lost, and patrols offered some good opportunities to the venturesome.

The air service had at this time an extra distinction. They were the only arm of America's service that had really impressed the Germans. The German experts, as they spoke through their newspapers, were contemptuous of the army and all its works. They maintained that it would be impossible for American transports to bring more than half a million men to France, if they tried forever, because the submarines would add to the inherent difficulties, and make "American participation" of less actual menace than that of Roumania.

The *Frankfurter Zeitung* said: "There is no doubt that the Entente lay great stress on American assistance on this point (air warfare). Nor do we doubt that the technical resources of the enemy will achieve brilliant work in this branch. But all this has its limits . . . in this field, superiority in numbers is by no means decisive. Quality and the men are what decide."

Major Hoffe, of the German General Staff, wrote in the *Weser Zeitung*: "The only American help seriously to be reckoned with is aerial aid."

There was a quantity of such talk. Incidentally, the same experts who limited America's troops to half a million in France at the most indulgent estimate, said, over and over, that a million were to be feared, just the number announced to be in France by President Wilson one year from the time of the first debarkation.

The aviators worked hard enough to deserve the German honor. In the French school supervised by the Americans the schedule would have furnished Dickens some fine material for pathos.

The day began at 4 A. M., with a little coffee for an eye-opener. The working-day began in the fields at 5 sharp. If the weather permitted there were flights till 11, when the pupil knocked off for a midday meal. He was told to sleep then till 4 in the afternoon, when flying recommenced, and continued till 8.30. The rest of his time was all his own. He spent it getting to bed.

There was an average of four months under this régime. The flier began on the ground, and for weeks he was permitted no more than a dummy machine, which wobbled along the ground like a broken-winged duck, and this he used to learn levers and mechanics—those things he had toiled over on paper before he was even allowed on the field.

After a while he was permitted in the air with an instructor, and finally alone. There were creditably few disasters. For months there was never a casualty. But if a man had an accident it was a perfectly open-and-shut affair. Either he ruined himself or he escaped. It was part of the French system with men who escaped to send them right back into the air,

as soon as they could breathe, so that the accident would not impair their flying-nerves.

After the three or four months of foundation work, if the term is not too inept for flying, the aviator had his final examination, a triangular flight of about ninety miles, with three landings. The landings are the great trick of flying. Like the old Irish story, it isn't the falling that hurts you, it's the sudden stop.

If the pupil made his landings with accuracy he was passed on to the big school at Pau, where acrobatics are taught. The flight acrobat was the ace, the armies found. And no man went to battle till he could do spiral, serpentine, and hairpin turns, could manage a tail spin, and "go into a vrille"—a corkscrew fall which permitted the flier to make great haste from where he was, and yet not lose control of his machine, at the same time that he made a tricky target for a Boche machine-gun.

While all this training was going on the ranks of American aviators were filling in at the top. The celebrated Lafayette Escadrille, the American aviators who joined the French Army at the beginning of the war, was taken into the

American Army in the late summer. Then all the Americans who were in the French aviation service who had arrived by way of the Foreign Legion were called home.

These were put at instructing for a time, then their several members became the veteran core of later American squadrons. This air unit was finally placed at 12 fliers and 250 men, and before Christmas there was a goodly number of them, a number not to be told till the care-free and uncensored days after the war.

By the beginning of the new year American aviation-fields were taking shape. The engineers had laid a spur of railroad to link the largest of them with the main arteries of communication, and the labor units had built the same sort of small wooden city that sprang up all over America as cantonments.

There were roomy barracks, a big hall where chapel services alternated with itinerant entertainers, a little newspaper building, plenty of office-barracks with typewriters galore and the little models on which aviators learn their preliminary lessons.

There is one training-field six miles long and

a mile and a half wide, where all kinds of instruction is going on, even to acrobatics.

And there are several large training-schools just behind the fighting-lines, which have plenty of visiting Germans to practise on.

The enormity of the American air programme made it a little unwieldy at first, and it got a late start. But on the anniversary of its beginning it had unmeasured praise from official France, and even before that the French newspapers had loudly sung its praises.

The American aviator as an individual was a success from the beginning. He has unsurpassed natural equipment for an ace, and his training has been unprecedentedly thorough. And he has dedicated his spirit through and through. He has set out to make the Germans see how wise they were to be afraid.

CHAPTER X

THE SCHOOLS FOR OFFICERS

THE first economy effected after the broad sweep of training was in swing was to segregate the officers for special training, and these officers' schools fell into two types.

First, there was the camp for the young commissioned officers from Plattsburg, and similar camps in America, to give them virtually the same training as the soldiers had, but at a sharper pace, inclusive also of more theory, and to increase their executive ability in action; second, there was the school established by General Pershing, late in the year, through which non-commissioned officers could train to take commissions.

Of the first type, there were many, of the second, only one.

The camp for the Plattsburg graduates which turned its men first into the fighting was one having about 300 men, situated in the south of

France, where the weather could do its minimum of impeding.

These youngsters arrived in September, and they were fighting by Thanksgiving. The next batch took appreciably less time to train, partly because the organization had been tried out and perfected on the first contingent, and partly because they were destined for a longer stay in the line before they were hauled back for training others. This process was duplicated in scores of schools throughout France, so that the Expeditionary Force, what with its reorganization to require fewer officers, and its complementary schools, never lacked for able leadership.

The first school was under command of Major-General Robert Bullard, a veteran infantry officer with long experience in the Philippines to draw on, and a conviction that the proper time for men to stop work was when they dropped of exhaustion.

His officers began their course with a battalion of French troops to aid them, and they were put into company formation, of about 75 men to the company, just as the humble doughboy was.

They were all infantry officers, who were to take command as first and second lieutenants, but they specialized in whatever they chose. They were distinguished by their hat-bands: white for bayonet experts, blue for the liquid-fire throwers, yellow for the machine-gunners, red for the rifle-grenadiers, orange for the hand-grenadiers, and green for the riflemen. These indicated roughly the various things they were taught there, in addition to trench-digging and the so-called battalion problems, recognizable to the civilian as team-work.

Their work was not of the fireside or the library. It was the joint opinion of General Pershing, General Sibert, and General Bullard that the way to learn to dig a trench was to dig it, and that nothing could so assist an officer in directing men at work as having first done the very same job himself.

They had a permanent barracks which had once housed young French officers, in pre-war days, and they had a generous Saturday-to-Monday town leave.

These two benefactions, plus their tidal waves of enthusiasm, carried them through the her-

culean programme devised by General Bullard and the assisting French officers and troops.

They began, of course, with trench-digging, and followed with live grenades, machine-guns, automatic rifles, service-shells, bayonet work, infantry formation for attack, and gas tests. Then they were initiated into light and fire signals, star-shells, gas-bombing, and liquid fire.

Last, they came in on the rise of the wave of rifle popularity, and trained at it even more intensively than the first of the doughboys. "The rifle is the American weapon," was General Pershing's constant reiteration, "and it has other uses than as a stick for a bayonet."

But efficacious as schools of this type were, there was a need they did not meet, a need first practical, then sentimental, and equally valuable on both counts.

This was the training for the man from the ranks. The War College in America, acting in one of its rare snatches of spare time, had ordered a school for officers in America to which any enlisted man was eligible.

General Pershing overhauled this arrangement in one particular: he framed his school in

France so that nothing lower than a corporal could enter it. This was on the theory that a man in the ranks who had ability showed it soon enough, and was rewarded by a non-com. rank. That was the time when the way ahead should rightfully be opened to him.

This school commenced its courses just before Christmas, with everything connected with it thoroughly worked out first.

The commissions it was entitled to bestow went up to the rank of major. Scholars entered it by recommendation of their superior officers, which were forwarded by the commanders of divisions or other separate units, and by the chiefs of departmental staffs, to the commander-in-chief. Before these recommendations could be made, the record of the applicant must be scanned closely, and his efficiency rated —if he were a linesman, by fighting quality, and if in training still or behind the lines, by efficiency in all other duties.

Then he entered and fared as it might happen. If he succeeded, his place was waiting for him at his graduation, as second lieutenant in a replacement division.

Enormous numbers of these replacement divisions had to be held behind the lines. From them, all vacancies occurring in the combat units in the lines were filled. And rank, within them, proceeded in the same manner as in any other division. Their chief difference was that there was no limit set upon the number of second lieutenants they could include, so that promotions waited mainly for action to earn them.

Within the combat units, the vacancies were to be filled two-thirds by men in line of promotion within the unit itself, and one-third from the replacement divisions.

The replacement division's higher officers were those recovered from wounds, who had lost their place in line, and those who had not yet had any assignments. To keep up a sufficient number of replacement divisions, the arriving depot battalions were held to belong with them.

This school was located near the fighting-line, and its instructors were preponderantly American.

It put the "stars of the general into the pri-

vate's knapsack," and began the great mill of officer-making that the experiences of other armies had shown to be so tragically necessary. Needless to say, it was packed to overflowing from its first day.

CHAPTER XI

SOME DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

SO satisfactory to itself was the progress of the American Expeditionary Force in becoming an army that by the end of its first month of training it was ready for important visitors. True, the first to come was one who would be certain to understand the force's initial difficulties, and who would also be able to help as well as inspect. He was General Petain, Commander-in-Chief of the French Army, and he came for inspection of both French and American troops on August 19, three days after General Sibert had had a family field-day to take account of his troops.

General Petain came down with General Pershing, and the first inspection was of billets. Then the two generals reviewed the Alpine Chasseurs, and General Petain awarded some medals which had been due since the month before, when the Blue Devils were in the line.

After General Petain's visit with the Ameri-

can troops, he recommended their training and their physique equally, and said: "I think the American Army will be an admirable fighting force within a short time."

This was also General Pershing's day for learning—his first session with one of his most difficult tasks. He had to follow the example of General Petain, and kiss the children, and accept the bouquets thrust upon both generals by all the little girls of the near-by Vosges towns.

General Pershing did better with the kissing as his day wore on, though its foreignness to his experience was plain to the end. But with the bouquets he was an outright failure. Graciously as he might accept them, the holding of them was much as a doughboy might hold his first armful of live grenades.

The camp's next distinguished visitor was Georges Clemenceau, the veteran French statesman who was soon to be Premier of France. Clemenceau saw American troops that day for the second time, the first having been when, as a young French senator, he watched General Grant's soldiers march into Richmond.

He recalled to the sons and grandsons of those dusty warriors how inspired a sight it had been, and he added that he hoped to see the present generation march into Berlin.

When Clemenceau talked to the doughboys, however, he had more than old memories with which to stir them. He has a graceful, complete command of the English language, in which he made the two or three addresses interspersed in the full programme of his stay.

In one speech M. Clemenceau said: "I feel highly honored at the privilege of addressing you. I know America well, having lived in your country, which I have always admired, and I am deeply impressed by the presence of an American army on French soil, in defense of liberty, right, and civilization, against the barbarians. My mind compares this event to the Pilgrim Fathers, who landed on Plymouth Rock, seeking liberty and finding it. Now their children's children are returning to fight for the liberty of France and the world.

"You men have come to France with disinterested motives. You came not because you were compelled to come, but because you wished

to come. Your country always had love and friendship for France. Now you are at home here, and every French house is open to you. You are not like the people of other nations, because your motives are devoid of personal interest, and because you are filled with ideals. You have heard of the hardships before you, but the record of your countrymen proves that you will acquit yourselves nobly, earning the gratitude of France and the world."

At the end of this speech General Sibert said to the men who had heard it: "You will henceforth be known as the Clemenceau Battalion." That was the first unit of the American Army to have any designation other than its number.

Another civilian visitor was next, though he was civilian only in the sense that he had neither task nor uniform of the army. He was Raymond Poincaré, President of the French Republic, the leader of the French "bitter-enders," and sometimes called the stoutest-hearted soldier France has ever had.

President Poincaré made a thorough inspection. He, too, began with the billets, but he was not content to see them from the outside.

In fact, the first that one new major-general saw of him was the half from the waist down, the other half being obscured by the floor of the barn attic he was peering into.

President Poincaré made cheering speeches to the men, for the force of which they were obliged to rely upon his gestures and his intonations, since he spoke no English. But his sense was not wholly lost to the doughboys. At the peak of one of the President's most soaring flights those who understood French interrupted to applaud him.

"What did he say?" asked a doughboy.

"He said to give 'em hell," said another.

Fourth, and last, of the great Frenchmen, and greatest, from the soldier point of view, was Marshal Joffre, Marne hero, who came and spent a night and a day at camp.

It was mid-October when he came, and weeks of driving rain had preceded him. In spite of their gloom over the weather, the doughboys were eagerly anticipating the visit of Joffre, and they were wondering if the man of many battles would think them worth standing in the rain to watch.

A detachment of French buglers—buglers whom the Americans could never sufficiently admire or imitate, because they could twirl the bugles between beats and take up their blasts with neither pitch nor time lost—waited outside the quarters where the marshal was to spend the night. Half an hour before his motor came up the sun broke through the drizzle.

"He brings it with him," said a doughboy.

Marshal Joffre was accompanied by General Pershing, the Pershing personal staff and Joffre's aide, Lieutenant-Colonel Jean Fabry, who was with the French Mission in America. There were ovations in all the French villages through which they passed, and there were uproarious cheers when the party reached the American officers who were to be addressed by Marshal Joffre. In his short speech he said that America had come to help deliver humanity from the yoke of German insolence, and added: "Let us be united. Victory surely will be ours."

Later, after picked men had shown Joffre what they could do with grenades and bayonets, the marshal made a short speech to them, telling them of how his visit to America had

cheered and strengthened him, and how even greater was the stimulation he had had from seeing the Americans train in France.

In a statement to the Associated Press he said: "I have been highly gratified by what I have seen to-day. I am confident that when the time comes for American troops to go into the trenches and meet the enemy they will give the same excellent account of themselves in action as they did to-day in practice."

Northcliffe came in December, with Colonel House and members of the House Mission. He wrote a long impression of his visit for the English at home, in which he said that the finest sight he saw was the American rifle practice, in which the United States troops did exceptionally well. Then he praised them for their mastery of the British type of trench mortar, for their accuracy with grenades and, most significant of all, for their able handling of themselves after the bombs were thrown, so that they should have a maximum of safety in battle. The doughboys had finally learned their hardest lesson.

Sir Walter Roper Lawrence, who was coming

to America on a special war mission, went to camp in early December to see how the doughboys fared, so that he might report on them at home.

He had just inquired of General Sir Julian Byng, who had accidentally had the assistance of some American engineers at Cambrai, what they should be valued at, and Sir Julian had answered: "Very earnest, very modest, and very helpful."

"I must say that is my opinion, too," said Sir Walter, when he came to camp. "They are fine fellows to look at—as good-looking soldiers as any man might wish to see. They have a wonderfully springy step, much more springy than one sees in other soldiers. They are clean, well set up, and they are always cheerful. They are splendidly fed and well quartered, and they are desperately keen to learn, and as desperately keen to get into the thick of things. If they seem to have any worries it is that they are not getting in as quickly as they would like to.

"The American troops have everywhere made a decidedly favorable impression. I am ex-

tremely proud of my British citizenship, I have been all my life, but if I were an American I would be insufferably proud of my citizenship. In all history there is nothing that approaches her transporting such an enormous army so great a distance oversea to fight for an ideal."

After the new year W. A. Appleton, secretary of the General Federation of Trades Unions in England, made a visit to France, and described the American camps for his own public through the Federation organ.

"I see everywhere," he wrote, "samples of the American armies that we are expecting will enable the Allies to clear France of the Germans. Most of the men are fine specimens of humanity, and those with whom I spoke showed no signs of braggadocio, too frequently attributed to America. They were quiet, well-spoken fellows, fully alive to the seriousness of the task they have undertaken, and they apparently have but one regret—that they had not come into the war soon enough. It was pleasant to talk to these men and to derive encouragement from their quiet, unobtrusive strength."

These were the things which were playing upon public opinion in France and England, reinforcing the good-will with which the first American soldiers were welcomed there.

When United States soldiers paraded again in the streets of London, late in the spring of 1918, and when they marched down the new Avenue du Président Wilson in Paris, on July 4, 1918, the greetings to them had lost in hysteria and grown in depth, till the magnitude of the demonstrations and the quality of them drew amazement from the oldest of the old stagers.

CHAPTER XII

THE MEN WHO DID EVERYTHING

IF the American Expeditionary Force had landed in the middle of the Sahara Desert instead of France, it would not have been under greater necessity to do things for itself, and immediately. For even where the gallant French were entirely willing to pull their belts in one more notch and make provision for the newcomers, the moral obligation not to permit their further sacrifice was enormous. And although, as it happened, there were many things, at first, in which the A. E. F. was obliged to ask French aid, this number was speedily cut down and finally obliterated.

The men on whom fell the largest burden of making American troops self-sufficing in the first half-year of war, were the nine regiments of engineers recruited in nine chief cities of America before General Pershing sailed. They were officered to a certain extent by Regular Army engineers, but more by railroad officials

who were recruited at the same time from all the large railroads of America.

And they operated what roads they found, and built more, till finally, after a year, during which they had assistance from the army engineers and a fair number of labor and special units, they had created in France a railroad equal to any one of the middle-sized roads of long standing in this country, with road-beds, rolling-stock, and equipment equal to the best, and railway terminals which, in the case of one of their number, rivalled the port of Hamburg.

These were the men who were first to arrive in Europe after General Pershing, who beat them over by only a few days. They were not fighting units, so that they did not dim the glory of the Regulars, though they had the honor to carry the American army uniform first through the streets of London.

They were the first of the army in the battle-line, too, though again their civilian pursuit, though failing to serve to protect them against German attack, deprived them of the flag-flying and jubilation that attended the infantrymen and artillerymen in late October.

But though their public honor was so limited, their private honor with the Expeditionary Force was without stint. It was "the engineers here" and "the engineers there" till it must have seemed to them that they were carrying the burden of the entire world.

On May 6, 1917, the War Department issued this statement: "The War Department has sent out orders for the raising, as rapidly as possible, of nine additional regiments of engineers which are destined to proceed to France at the earliest possible moment, for work on the lines of communication. . . . All details regarding the force will be given out as fast as compatible with the best public interests."

The recruiting-points were New York, Chicago, St. Louis, Boston, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Atlanta, San Francisco, and Philadelphia. It was the job of each city to provide a regiment. And it became the job of the great railway brotherhoods to see that neither the kind nor the number of men accepted would cripple the railways at home.

The War Department asked for 12,000 men, and had offers of about four times that many.

The result was, of course, that the 9 regiments were men of magnificent physique and sterling equipment. One regiment boasted 125 members who measured more than 6 feet.

Their first official task was to help to repair and man the French railways leading up to the lines, carrying food for men and guns.

Their next was to build and man the railways which were to connect the American seaport with the training-camps, and last, with the fighting-line itself.

The promise of immediate action in France was fulfilled to the letter. Two months from the day the recruiting began, the "Lucky 13th," the regiment recruited in Chicago, landed in a far-away French town, whose inhabitants leaned out of their windows in the late, still night, to throw them roses and whispers of good cheer—anything louder than whispers being under a ban because of the nearness to the front—and the day following, with French crews at their elbows, they were running French trains up and down the last line of communications.

These were men who had years of railroading behind them. Many of them were officered by

the same men who had been their directors in civil life. It was no uncommon thing to hear a private address his captain by his first name. One day a private said to his captain, "Bill, you got all the wrong dope on this," to which the captain replied severely: "I told you before about this discipline—if you want to quarrel with my orders, you call me mister."

But military discipline was never a real love with the engineers. "What's military discipline to us? We got Rock Island discipline," said a brawny first lieutenant, when, because he was a fellow passenger on a train with a correspondent, he felt free to speak his mind.

"I won't say it's not all right in its way, but it's not a patch on what we have in a big yard. A man obeys in his sleep, for he knows if he don't somebody's life may have to pay for it—not his own, either, which would make it worse. That's Rock Island. But it don't involve any salutin', or 'if-you-pleasin'.' If my fellows say 'Tom' I don't pay any attention, unless there's some officer around."

This attitude toward discipline characterizes all the special units to a certain degree, though

the engineers somewhat more than the rest, for the reason that they had to offer not a mere negation of discipline but a substitute of their own.

But, whatever their sentiments toward their incidental job as soldiers, there was no mistaking their zest for their regular job of railroading.

They found the railways of France in amazingly fine condition, in spite of the fact that they had, many of them, been built purely for war uses, and under the pressure inevitable in such work. Those behind the British lines were equally fine.

As soon as the American engineers appeared in the communication-trains, their troubles with the Germans began. On the second run of the "Lucky 13th" men, a German airplane swept down and flew directly over the engine for twenty minutes, taking strict account.

Then they began to bomb the trains, and many a time the crews had to get out and sit under the trains till the raid was over.

The engineers kept their non-combatant character till after the December British thrust at Cambrai, when half a hundred of them, work-

ing with their picks and shovels behind the lines, suddenly found themselves face to face with German counter-attacking troops, and had to fight or run. The engineers snatched up rifles and such weapons as they could from fallen soldiers, and with these and their shovels helped the British to hold their line.

The incident was one of the most brilliant of the year, partly because it was dramatically unexpected, partly because it permitted the Americans to prove their readiness to fight, in whatever circumstances. The spectacle of fifty peaceful engineers suddenly turned warriors of pick and shovel was used by the journals of many countries to demonstrate what manner of men the Americans were.

But the work for British and French, on their strategic railways, was not to continue for long. The great American colony was already on blue-print, and the despatches from Washington were estimating that many millions would have to be spent for the work.

The annual report of Major-General William Black, chief of engineers, which was made public in December, stated that almost a billion

would be needed for engineering work in France in 1919, if the work then in progress were to be concluded satisfactorily.

General Black's report showed that equipment for 70 divisions, or approximately 1,000,000 men, had been purchased within 350 hours after Congress declared war, including nearly 9,000,000 articles, among them 4 miles of pontoon bridges.

Every unit sent to France took its full equipment along, and the cost of the "railroad engineers" alone was more than $12,000,000.

Not long after the men were running the French and British trains, they were building their lines in Flanders, in the interims of building the American lines from sea to camp.

The building was through, and over, such mud as passes description. The engineers tell a story of having passed a hat on a road, and on picking it up, found that there was a soldier under it. They dug him out. "But I was on horseback," the soldier protested.

The tracks were rather floated than built. Where the shell fire was heavy, the men could only work a few hours each day, under barrage

of artillery or darkness, and they were soon making speed records.

"The fight against the morass is as stern and difficult as the fight against the Boche," said an engineer, speaking of the Flanders tracks. One party of men, in an exposed position, laid 180 feet of track in a record time, and left the other half of the job till the following day. When they came back, they found that their work had been riddled with shell-holes, whereat they fell to and finished the other half and repaired the first half in the same time as had starred them on the first day's job.

It was not long till they had a European reputation.

The tracks they were to lay for America, though they were far enough from the Flanders mud, had a sort of their own to offer. The terminal was built by tremendous preliminaries with the suction-dredge. The long lines of communication between camp and sea were varyingly difficult, some of them offering nothing to speak of, some of them abominable. The little spur railways leading to the hospitals, warehouses, and subsidiary training-camps

which lay afield from the main line were more quickly done.

In addition to all these things, the engineers were the handy men of France. They picked up some of the versatility of the Regular Army engineers, whose accomplishments are never numbered, and they built hospitals and barracks, too, in spare time, and they laid waterways, and helped out in General Pershing's scheme to put the inland waterways of France to work. The canal system was finally used to carry all sorts of stores into the interior of France, and before the engineers were finished the army was getting its goods by rail, by motor, and by boat, though it was not till late in the year that the transportation machinery could avoid great jams at the port.

The engineers were, from first to last, the most picturesque Americans in France. They came from the great yards and terminals of East and West, they brought their behavior, their peculiar flavor of speech, and their efficiency with them, and they refused to lose any of them, no matter what the outside pressure.

"It's a great life," said one of them from the

Far West, "and I may say it's a blamed sight harder than shooing hoboes off the cars back home. But there's times when I could do with a sight of the missus and the kids and the Ford. If it takes us long to lick 'em, it won't be my fault."

CHAPTER XIII

BEHIND THE LINES

THE difficulty of describing the American organization behind the lines in France lies in the fact that the story is nowhere near finished. The end of the first year saw huge things done, but huger ones still in the doing, and the complete and the incomplete so blended that there was almost no point at which a finger could be laid and one might say: "They have done this."

But at the end of the first year all the foundations were down and the corner-stones named, and though much necessary secrecy still envelops the actual facts, something at least can be told.

America could no more move direct from home to the line in the matter of her supplies than she could in that of her men. And it was at her intermediate stopping-point, in both cases, that her troubles lay. It was, as Belloc put it, the

problem of the hour-glass. Plenty of room at both ends and plenty of material were invalidated by the little strait between.

It was not a month from the time of the first landing of troops, in June, 1917, before the wharfs of the ports chiefly used by incoming American supplies were stacked high with unmoved cases.

The transportation men worked with might and main, but the Shipping Board at home, under the goad of restless and anxious people, was sending and sending the equipment to follow the men. And once landed, the supplies found neither roof to cover them nor means to carry them on.

This was the point at which General Pershing began to lament to Washington over his scarcity of stevedores, and labor units, and soon thereafter was the point at which he got them.

On September 14, 1917, W. W. Atterbury, vice-president of the Pennsylvania Railroad, was appointed director-general of transportation of the United States Expeditionary Force in France, and was given the rank of brigadier-general. General Atterbury was already in

France, and had been offering such expert advice and assistance to General Pershing as his civilian capacity would permit. With his appointment came the announcement of others, giving him the assistance of many well-known American railroad men.

When the First Division reached France it was discovered that it required four tons of tonnage to provide for each man. That meant 80,000 tons for each division, which, in the figures of the railroad man, meant eighty trains of 1,000 tons capacity for every division.

For the first 200,000 men in France, who formed the basis for the first railroad reckoning, 800 trains were necessary.

Obviously, these trains could not be taken from the already burdened French. Obviously, they could not tax further the trackage in France, though the trains and engines shipped had essential measurements to conform to the French road-beds, so that interchange was easy. Still more obviously, the trains could not be made in this country and rolled onto the decks of ships for transportation.

So that before the first soldier packed his

first kit on his way to camp the A. E. F. required railway-tracks, enormous reception-wharfs, assembling-plants and factories, and arsenals and warehouses beyond number.

The only things which America could buy in France were those which could be grown there, by women and old men and children, and those which were already made. The only continuing surplus product of France was big guns, which resulted from their terrific specialization in munition-plants during the war's first three years.

To find out what could legitimately be bought in France, and to buy it, paying no more for it than could be avoided by wise purchasing, General Pershing created a General Purchasing Board in Paris late in August. This board had a general purchasing agent at its head, who was the representative of the commander-in-chief, and he acted in concert with similar boards of the other Allied armies. His further job was to co-ordinate all the efforts of subordinate purchasing agents throughout the army. The chief of each supply department and of the Red Cross and the Y. M. C. A.

named purchasing agents to act under this board.

It was not long till this board was supervising the spending of many millions of dollars a month, which gives a fair estimate of what the total expenditure, both at home and abroad, had to be.

As a case in point, a single branch of this board bought in France, the first fortnight of November, 26,000 tons of tools and equipment, 4,000 tons of railway-ties, and 160 tons of cars. The cost was something over $3,000,000. These purchases alone saved the total cargo space of 20 vessels of 1,600 tons each.

The General Purchasing Board adopted the price-fixing policy created at Washington, in which it was aided by the shrewdest business heads among the British and French authorities.

This board also had power to commandeer ships, when they had to—notably in the case of bringing shipments of coal from England, where it was fairly plentiful, to France, where there was almost none.

A second scheme for co-ordination put into

effect by General Pershing was a board at which heads of all army departments could meet and act direct, without the necessity of going through the commander-in-chief. When the quartermaster's department made its budgets, the co-ordination department went over them and revised the estimates downward, or drafted work or supplies from some other department with a surplus, or redistributed within the quartermaster's stores, perhaps even granted the first requests. But there was a vast saving throughout the army zone.

The problem of America's "behind the lines," including as it did the creating of every phase of transportation, from trackage to terminals, and then providing the things to transport, not only for an army growing into the millions, but for much of civilian France, was one which, all wise observers said, was the greatest of the war. Just how staggering were these difficulties must not be told till later, but surmises are free. And the praise for overcoming them which poured from British and French onlookers had the value and authority of coming from men who had themselves been through

like crises, and who knew every obstacle in the way of the Americans.

But if the preparatory stages must be abridged in the telling, there is no ban on a little expansiveness as to what was finally done.

Within a year American engineers and laborers and civilians working behind the lines had made of the waste lands around an old French port a line of modern docks where sixteen heavy cargo-vessels could rest at the same time, being unloaded from both sides at once at high speed, by the help of lighters. These docks were made by a big American pile-driver, which in less than a year had driven 30,000 piles into the marshy ooze, and made a foundation for enormous docks.

Just behind the docks is a plexus of railway-lines which, what with incoming and outgoing tracks and switches and side-lines, contains 200 miles of trackage in the terminal alone.

It is for the present no German's business how many hundred miles of double and triple track lead back to the fighting-line, and it is the censor's rule that one must tell nothing a

German shouldn't know. But there is plenty of track, figures or no figures.

Equal preparation has been made for such supplies as must remain temporarily at the docks.

There are 150 warehouses, most of them completed, each 400 by 50 feet, and each with steel walls and top and concrete floors. When the warehouses are finished they will be able to hold supplies for an army of a million men for thirty days. They are supplemented by a giant refrigerating-plant, with an enormous capacity, which is served by an ice-making factory with an output of 500 tons daily, the whole ice department being operated by a special "ice unit" of the army, officially called Ice Plant Company 301. The ice department also has its own refrigerator-cars for delivering its wares frozen to any part of France.

To provide for gun appetites as abundantly as for human, an arsenal was begun at the same point, which, when completed, will have cost a hundred million dollars. This arsenal and ordnance-depot is being built by an American firm, at the request of the French Mission in

America, who vetoed the American project to give the work to French contractors, because of the man-shortage in France.

It has been built under the direct supervision of the War Department, and was specifically planned so that it might in time, or case of need, become one of the main munition-distribution centres for all the Allies. Small arms and ammunition are stored and dispensed there, while big guns go direct from French factories.

Regiments of mechanical and technical experts were constantly being recruited in America for this work, and they were sent by the thousands every month of the first year. Maintenance of the ordnance-base alone requires 450 officers and 16,000 men.

Included in the arsenal and ordnance-depot are a gun-repair shop, equipped to reline more than 800 guns a month, a carriage-repair plant of large capacity, a motor-vehicle repair-shop, able to overhaul more than 1,200 cars a month, a small-arms repair-shop, ready to deal with 58,000 small arms and machine-guns a month, a shop for the repair of horse and infantry equip-

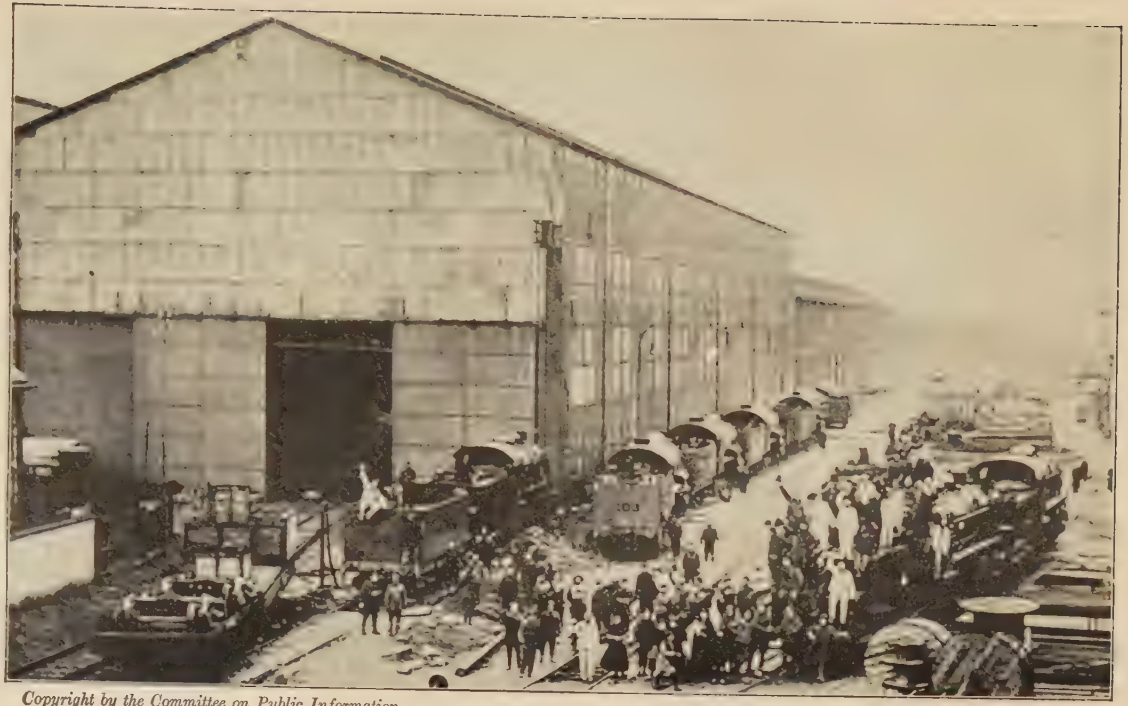
ment, and a reloading-plant, capable of reloading 100,000 artillery-cartridges each day.

The assembling-shops in connection with the railroad were built on a commensurate scale. Even in an incomplete state one shop was able to turn out twenty-odd freight-cars a day, of three different designs, and at a neighboring point a plant for assembling the all-steel cars was making one full train a day. The locomotives were assembled in still a third place. This will have turned out 1,100 locomotives, built and shipped flat from America, at the end of its present contract. Already a third of this work has been done.

And there were, of course, the necessary number of roundhouses, and the like, to complete the organization of the self-sufficient railroad.

Not far away was a tremendous assembling and repair plant for airplanes, the operators of which had all been trained in the French factories, so that they knew the planes to the last inner bolthead.

The last assembly-plant was far from least in picturesqueness. It was for the construction, from numbered pieces shipped from Switzer-



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U. S. locomotive-assembling yards in France.

land, of 3,500 wooden barracks, each about 100 feet long by 20 wide, and of double thickness for protection against French weather.

The most amusing of the incidental depots was called the Reclamation Depot, at which the numerous articles collected on the battlefield by special salvage units were overhauled and refurbished, or altered to other uses. Nothing was too trifling to be accepted. The "old-clo' man" of No Man's Land was responsible for an amazing amount of good material, made at the Reclamation Depot from old belts, coat sleeves, and the like. Many a good German helmet went back to the "square-heads" as American bullets.

In the same American district there was a great artillery camp, with remount stables, containing thousands of horses and mules. Under French tutelage, the American veterinarians had learned to extract the bray from the army mule, reducing his far-carrying silvery cry to a mere wheeze, with which he could do no indiscreet informing of his presence near the battle-lines. So the mule-hospital was one of the busiest spots in the port.

A short distance from the port, the engineers built a 20,000-bed hospital, the largest in existence, comprising hundreds of little one-story structures, set in squares over huge grounds, so that every room faced the out-of-doors.

Between the port and the hospital, and beyond the port along the coast, were the rest-camps, the receiving-camps, and a huge separate camp for the negro stevedores. Near enough to be convenient, but not for sociability, were the camps for the German prisoners, who put in plenty of hard licks in the great port-building.

Midway between all this activity at the coast and the training and fighting activity at the fighting-line there was what figured on the army charts as "Intermediate Section," whose commanders were responsible for the daily averaging of supply and demand.

In the intermediate section, linked by rail, were the supplementary training-camps, schools, base hospitals, rest-areas, engineering and repair shops, tank-assembling plants, ordnance-dumps and repair-shops, the chief storage for "spare parts," all machinery used in the army, cold-storage plants, oil and petrol depots,

the army bakeries, the camouflage centre, and the forestry departments, busy with fuel for the army and timber for the engineers.

The achievement of the first year was literally worthy of the unstinted praise it received. And perhaps its finest attribute was that most of it was permanent, and will remain, while France remains, as America's supreme gift toward her post-war recovery.

CHAPTER XIV

FRANCE AND THE MEDICOES

THE history of the A. E. F. will be in most respects the history of resources cunningly turned to new ends, of force redirected, with some of its erstwhile uses retained, and of a colossal adventure in making things do. Where the artillery was weak, the A. E. F. eked out with the coast-artillery. Where the engineer corps was insufficient, the railroads were called on for special units, frankly unmilitary. A whole citizenry was abruptly turned to infantry. But one branch of the service, though scarcely worthy of much responsibility when the war began, was, nevertheless, the one most thoroughly prepared. The prize service was the Medical Corps, and it was in this state of astonishing preparedness because immediately before it became the Medical Corps, it had been the Red Cross, and the Red Cross knows no peace-times.

The question of what is Medical Corps and

what is Red Cross has always been a facer for the superficial historian.

Broadly speaking, the base hospitals of the army are organizations recruited and equipped in America by the Red Cross, and transported to France, where they become units of the army, under army discipline and direction, and supplied by the Medical Corps stores except in cases where these are inadvertently lacking, or unprovided for by the strictness of military supervision. In any case, where sufficient supplies are not forthcoming from the Medical Corps, they are given by the Red Cross.

This is the Red Cross on its military side. In its civilian work, which is extensive, and in its recreational work it carries on under its own name and by its own authority. Where it divides territory with the Y. M. C. A., the division is that the Y. M. C. A. takes the well soldier and the Red Cross the sick one, whenever either has time on his hands.

But the Medical Corps plus the Red Cross created between them a branch of the American Army in France which, from the moment of landing, was the boast of the nation.

For a year before America entered the war Colonel Jefferson Kean, director-general of the military department of the American Red Cross, had been organizing against the coming of American participation. Within thirty days after America's war declaration Colonel Kean announced that he had six base hospitals in readiness to go to the front, and within another thirty days these six units were on their way, equipped and ready to step into the French hospitals, schools, and what-not, waiting to receive them, and to do business as usual the following morning.

The six were organized at leading hospitals and medical schools: the Presbyterian Hospital of New York, with Doctor George E. Brewer in command; the Lakeside Hospital, Cleveland, with Doctor George W. Crile; the Medical School of Harvard University, with Doctor Harvey Cushing; the Pennsylvania Hospital, Philadelphia, with Doctor Richard Harte; the Medical School of Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, with Doctor Frederick Besley, and Washington University Hospital, Saint Louis, with Doctor Frederick T. Murphy.

A little while later the Postgraduate unit went from New York, the Roosevelt Hospital unit from there, and the Johns Hopkins unit from Baltimore. Many others followed in due time.

These hospital units, recruited and organized under the Red Cross, took their full complement of surgeons, physicians, and nurses. All these became members of the army as soon as they landed in France, and they were supplemented, either there or before they crossed, with members of Medical Corps, enlisted just after America entered the war.

The military rank of the physicians and surgeons conformed in a general way to the unofficial rank of the same men when they had worked together in the hospitals from which they came. There were, of course, some exceptions to this rule, but not enough to make it no rule at all.

It was true of the medicoes, as it was of the engineers, that they took military discipline none too seriously, because they brought a discipline of their own. Wherever, in civilian pursuits, the lives of others hang on prompt

obedience, there is a strictness which no military strictness can outdo. This was true of the personnel of any hospital in America, before there was thought of war. It was equally true, of course, after the units were established behind the fighting-lines. But there was a certain lack of prompt salute and a certain freedom with first names which not the stoutest management from the military arm of the service could obliterate from the base hospitals. The Medical Corps enlisted men were naturally not sinners in this respect. The routine work of the base hospitals all fell to them. It was usually a sergeant of the army—though he was never a veteran—who attended the reception-rooms, kept account of symptoms, clothes, and first and second names, and did the work of orderly in the hospital. It was the privates who kept the mess and washed the dishes and changed the sheets.

The nurses went under military discipline and into military segregation—sometimes a little nettlesome, when the hospitals were far from companionship of any outside sort.

The sites selected for the hospitals were either

French hospitals which were given over, or schools or big public buildings remade into hospitals by the engineers. Each site was arranged so that it could be enlarged at will. And the railways which connected the outlying hospitals with the rest of the American communications were laid so that other hospitals could be easily placed along their line. There was a splendid elasticity in the Medical Corps plan.

One base hospital was much like another, except for size. Those near the line differed somewhat from those farther back, but their scheme was uniform. At any rate, the history of their doings was similar enough to have one history do for them all. Take, for example, one of the New York units which landed in August and was placed nearer the coast than the fighting. It was put in trim by the engineers, then sanitated by the humbler members of the Medical Corps. The great wards were laid out, the kitchens were built, windows were pried open —always the first American job in France, to the great disgust and alarm of the French— and baths were put in.

The chief surgeon had specialized in noses and throats at home. When the hospital was ready, naturally the soldiers were not in need of it—being still in training in the Vosges—so the services of the hospital were opened to the civilian population of France.

By November there was not an adenoid in all those parts. The death-rate almost vanished. Into this rural France, where there had been no hospital and only a nursing home kept by some Sisters of Mercy who saw their first surgical operation within the base hospital, there came this skilful organization, handled by men whose incomes at home had been measured in five figures, and all the healing they had was free.

Multiply this by twenty, and then by thirty, before the pressing need for care for soldiers directed the Medical Corps back to first channels, and there will be some gauge of what this service did for France.

And the gratitude of France was more than commensurate. Praise of the American Medical Service flowed unceasingly from officials and civilians, statesmen and journalists. There

were constant demands made upon the French Government that it should pattern its own medical forces exactly upon the American, making it the branch of the medical specialist and not of the politician or the military man.

The individual officers of the Medical Corps had much to learn, however, from the French and the British. Though they knew hygiene, prophylaxis, antisepsis, and surgery as few groups of men have ever known it, they became scholars of the humblest in the surgery of the battle-field. Every officer of the Medical Corps was kept on a round of visits behind French and British fronts during the fairly peaceful interim between their landing and the American occupation of a front-line sector.

The Red Cross was the great auxiliary of the Medical Corps. It kept up its recruiting in America, both for nurses and physicians, and for supplies.

And in supplies it played its greatest part. The Red Cross maintained enormous warehouses, separate entirely from army control, which contained provisions to meet every possible shortage. It was known by the Red

Cross that never in the history of the world had there been a medical corps of any army that had not finally broken down. No matter how painstaking the provision, the need was always tragically greater.

And so surgical dressings, sets of surgical instruments, medicines, antiseptics, and anæsthetics piled up in the great A. R. C. storehouses.

Then there were the things for which the Medical Corps frankly made no provision, which could have no place in a strictly military programme, such as food delicacies of great cost, special articles of clothing, and amusements. Every hospital convalescent ward had its phonograph, its checker-boards, its chess-sets, and its dominoes. That was the Red Cross.

The Red Cross had three hospitals of its own in Paris. The first of these was at Neuilly, the hospital which had been the American Ambulance Hospital from the beginning of the war, given over on the third anniversary of its inauguration. Here French and American soldiers, American civilians who worked with the

Red Cross Hospital at Neuilly, formerly the American Ambulance Hospital.

army, and Red Cross officers and men were cared for. The second had been Doctor Blake's Hospital, and when it became a Red Cross hospital, it was made to include the gigantic laboratory where investigations were made, and where the American Red Cross had the honor to ferret out the cause of trench-fever. This fever had been one of the baffling tragedies of the war, because in the press of caring for their wounded, other hospitals had been unable to give it sufficient research.

The third was the Reid Hospital, equipped and supplied by Mrs. Whitelaw Reid.

In the long period when all this hospital organization was at the command of civilian France, inestimably fine work was done. It was a sort of poetic tuition fee for the instruction in war surgery which was meanwhile going on from veteran French surgeons to the American newcomers. At the end of the first year, the Medical Corps was itself ready for any stress, and it had mightily relieved the stress it had already found.

CHAPTER XV

IN CHARGE OF MORALE

IF the army as a whole was a story of old skill in new uses, certainly the most extraordinary single upheaval was that of the Y. M. C. A. Though it had grown into many paths of civil life, in peace-times, that could not have been foreshadowed by its founders, probably the wildest speculation of its future never included the purveying of vaudeville and cigarettes to soldiers in France.

Yet just that was what the Y. M. C. A. was doing, within less than a year from the American Army's arrival in France, and its only lamentation was that it had nowhere near enough cigarettes and vaudeville to purvey.

It accepted the offer of the United States Government to watch over the morale of the soldiers abroad, partly because it was so excellently organized that it could handle a task of such vast scope, and partly because both French and British Armies had got such fine

results from similar organizations that the American Y. M. C. A. felt itself to be historically elected.

The Y. M. C. A. had cut its wisdom-teeth long before it became a part of the army. Its directors had accepted the fact that a young man is apt to be more interested in his biceps than in his soul, and that if he can have athletics aplenty, and entertainment that really entertains, he'd as lief be out of mischief as in it.

But even this was not quite broad enough for the needs of the army away from home. And one of the first things the Y. M. C. A. did in France, and the stoutest pillar of its great success, was to abandon the slightest aversion to bad language, or to the irreligion that brims out of a cold, wet, and tired soldier in defiant spurts, and to cultivate, in their stead, a sympathetic feeling for the want of smokes and a good show.

The secretaries sent abroad to build the first huts and watch over the first soldiers were men selected for their skill in getting results against considerable obstacles. Those who followed, as the organization grew, were specialists of every sort. There were nationally famous

sportsmen, to keep the baseball games up to scratch, and to see that gymnastics out-of-doors were helped out by the rules. There were men who could handle crowds, keep an evening's entertainment going, play good ragtime, make good coffee, and produce cigarettes and matches out of thin air.

And, most important of all, they were men who could eradicate the doughboy's suspicion that the Y. M. C. A. was a doleful, overly prayerful, and effeminate institution.

The Y. M. C. A. was dealing with the doughboy when he was on his own time. If he didn't want to go to the "Y" hut, nobody could make him. Certain things that were bad for him were barred to him by army regulation. But there was a margin left over. If the doughboy was doing nothing else, he might be sitting alone somewhere, feeling of his feelings, and finding them very sad. The army did not cover this, but the Y. M. C. A. took the ground that being melancholy was about as bad as being drunk.

But, naturally, the Red Triangle man had to use his tact. If he didn't have any, he was sent home. His job was to persuade the doughboy,

not to instruct him. And before long, the rule of the Y. M. C. A. was flatly put: "Never mind your own theories—do what the soldiers want."

That is why the "Y" huts—the combination shop, theatre, chapel, and reading-room, coffee-stall and soda fountain, baseball-locker and cigarette store, post-office and library which are run by the Y. M. C. A. from coast to battle-line —are packed by soldiers every hour of the day and evening.

The "Y" huts began with the army. Before the second day of the First Division's landing, there was a circus banner across the foot of the main street stating: "This is the way to the Y. M. C. A. Get your money changed, and write home." By following the pointing red finger painted on the banner, one found a wooden shack, with a few chairs, a lot of writing-paper and French money, a secretary and a heap of good-will.

As the army moved battleward, these huts appeared just ahead of the soldiers, with increased stores at each new place. American cigarettes were on the counters. A few books arrived.

The Y. M. C. A. proved its persuasiveness by its huts. A member of the quartermasters' corps said, one day, in a fit of exasperation over a waiting job: "How do these 'Y' fellows do it—I can't turn without falling over a shack, built for them by the soldiers in their off time. Do I get any work out of these soldiers when they're off? I do not. They're too busy building 'Y' huts."

The first entertainment in the "Y" huts was when the company bands moved into them because the weather was too bad to play out-of-doors. The concerts were a great success. By and by, men who knew something interesting were asked to make short lectures to the soldiers. It was an easy step to asking some clever professional entertainer to come down and give a one-man show. Then Elsie Janis, who was in Europe, made a flying tour of the "Y" huts, and a little while after, E. H. Sothern and Winthrop Ames went over to see how much organized entertainment could be sent from America.

The result of their visit was The Over-There Theatre League, to which virtually every actor and actress in America volunteered to belong.

By the end of the first year, about 300 entertainers were either in France or on their way there or back.

Three months was the average time the performers were asked to give, and they circled so steadily that there were always about 200 of them at work on the "Y" circuit.

The work of the Y. M. C. A. did not stop with affording entertainment to the soldiers in the camps. They rented a big hotel in Paris and another in London, and they established many canteens in these two cities, so that their patrols—secretaries whose job was to rescue stray, lonely soldiers in the streets—would always have a near and comfortable place to offer to the wanderers.

Then they preceded the army to Aix-les-Bains and Chambery, the two resorts in the Savoy Alps where American soldiers were sent for their eight-day leaves, and arranged for cheap hotel accommodations, guides, theatres, etc., and they took over the Casino entirely for the soldiers.

Their field canteens were just back of the fighting-line, and late at night it was the duty

of the secretaries to store their pockets with cigarettes and chocolate and with letters from home, and shoulder the big tins of hot coffee made in the canteens and go into the front-line trenches to serve the men there. In fact, the "Y" men did everything with the army except go over the top.

The largest part of work of this type fell to the Y. M. C. A. because they had the most flexible organization ready at the beginning of American participation. But they had substantial help, which as time went on grew more and more in volume, from several other associations. The Knights of Columbus and the Salvation Army both did magnificent service, in canteens and trenches. And of course the Red Cross took over the sick soldier and entertained and supplied him, as a part of their co-army work.

There was one branch of the Red Cross which perhaps did more than any other one thing to keep up the hearts and spirits of the soldiers—it was called the Department of Home Communications, and it was directed by Henry Allen, a Wichita, Kansas, newspaper man.

Mr. Allen believed that a soldier's letters did more for him than any other one thing, and that, failing letters, he must at least have reliable news of his home folks from time to time. Further, that every soldier was easier in his mind if he knew that his home folks would have news of him, fully and authentically, no matter what happened to him.

So Mr. Allen posted his representatives in every hospital, in every trench sector, and through them kept track of every soldier. If a man was taken prisoner Mr. Allen knew it. If he was wounded Mr. Allen knew just where and how. The man's family was told of it immediately. Presently, where this was possible, Mr. Allen's representative was writing letters from the wounded men to their relatives, and was receiving all Mr. Allen's news of these relatives for the men in the hospital.

In addition to things of this kind, done by Red Triangle men, Red Cross men, and the Salvation Army and the Knights of Columbus, all these organizations worked together to effect distributions of comfort kits and sweaters, gift cigarettes and chocolate, and all the dozen and

one things that made the soldiers find life a little more agreeable.

There was more than co-operation from the army itself. There was the deepest gratitude, openly expressed, from every member of the army, whether general or private, because it was a recognized fact that, though an army cannot do these things itself, it owes them more than it can ever repay.

CHAPTER XVI

INTO THE TRENCHES

AFTER months of training behind the lines the doughboys began to long for commencement. It came late in October. The point selected for the trench test of the Americans was in a quiet sector. The position lay about twelve miles due east from Nancy and five miles north of Lunéville. It extended roughly from Parroy to Saint-Die. Even after the entry of the Americans the sector remained under French command. In fact, the four battalions of our troops which made up the first American contingent on the fighting-line were backed up by French reserves. No better training sector could have been selected, for this was a quiet front. American officers who acted as observers along this line for several days before the doughboys went in found that shelling was restricted and raids few. Many villages close behind the lines on either side were respected because of a tacit agreement between the contend-

ing armies. French and Germans sent war-weary troops to the Lunéville sector to rest up. It also served to break in new troops without subjecting them to an oversevere ordeal, so that they might learn the tricks of modern warfare gradually.

Of course, even quiet sectors may become suddenly active, and care was taken to screen the movements of the soldiers carefully. It proved impossible, however, to keep the move a complete mystery, for when camion after camion of tin-hatted Americans moved away from the training area the villagers could not fail to suspect that something was about to happen. Perhaps these suspicions grew stronger when each group of fighting men sang loudly and cheerfully that they were "going to hang the Kaiser to a sour apple-tree."

The weather was distinctly favorable for the movement of troops. One of the blackest nights of the month awaited the Americans at the front. Rain fell, but not hard enough to impede transportation. Still, such weather was something of a moral handicap. Many of the newcomers would have been glad to take a lit-

tle shelling if they could have had a bit of a moon or a few stars to light their way to the trenches. Instead they groped their way along roads which were soft enough to deaden every sound. A wind moaned lightly overhead and the strict command of silence made it impossible to seek the proper antidote of song. One or two men struck up "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, the Boys Are Marching," as they headed for the front, but they were quickly silenced.

The march began about nine o'clock, after the soldiers had eaten heartily in a little village close to the lines. At the very edge of this village stood a cheerful inn and a moving-picture theatre. The doughboys looked a little longingly at both houses of diversion before they swung round the bend and followed the black road which led to the trench-line. The people of the village did not seem to be much excited by the fact that history was being made before their eyes. They had seen so many troops go by up that road that they could achieve no more than a friendly interest. They did not crowd close about the marchers as the people had done in Paris.

Seemingly the Germans had not been able to ascertain the time set for the coming of the Americans. The roads were not shelled at all. In fact, the German batteries were even more indolent than usual at this point. The relief was effected without incident, although a few stories drifted back about enthusiastic poilus who had greeted their new comrades with kisses.

The artillery beat the infantry into action. They had to have a start in order to get their guns into place, and some fifteen hours before the doughboys went into the trenches America had fired the first shot of the war against Germany. Alexander Arch, a sergeant from South Bend, Indiana, was the man who pulled the lanyard. The shot was a shrapnel shell and was directed at a German working-party who were presuming on the immunity offered by a misty dawn. They scattered at the first shot, but it was impossible to tell whether it caused any casualties. When the working-party took cover there were no targets which demanded immediate attention, and the various members of the gun crew were allowed the privilege of

firing the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth shots of the war. After that, shooting at the Germans ceased to become a historical occasion, but was a mere incident in the routine of duty, and was treated as such.

The only unusual incident which seriously threatened the peace of mind of the infantrymen in their first night in the trenches was the flash of a green rocket which occurred some fifteen or twenty minutes after they arrived. They had been taught that a green rocket would be the alarm for a gas attack, but this particular signal came from the German trenches and had no message for the Americans. The Germans may have suspected the presence of new troops, for the men were just a bit jumpy, as all newcomers to the trenches are, and a few took pot-shots at objects out in No Man's Land which proved to be only stakes in the barbed wire or tufts of waving grass.

Although the Germans made the first successful raid, the Americans took the first prisoner. He was captured only a few nights after the coming of the doughboys. A patrol picked him up close to the American wire. He was a

mail-carrier, and in cutting across lots to reach some of his comrades he lost his way and wandered over to the American lines. Although he was surprised, he was not willing to surrender, but made an attempt to escape after he had been ordered to halt. One of the doughboys fired at him as he ran and he was carried into the American trenches badly wounded. He died the next day.

Beginning on the night of November 2 and extending over into the early morning of November 3, the Germans made a successful raid against the American lines immediately after a relief. After a severe preliminary bombardment a large party of raiders came across. The bombardment had cut the telephone wires of the little group of Americans which met the attack and they were completely isolated. They fought bravely but greenly. Three Americans were killed, five were wounded, and twelve were captured. The Germans retired quickly with their prisoners.

American morale was not injured by this first jab of the Germans. On the other hand, it made the doughboys mad, and, better than

that, made them careful. A German attempt to repeat the raid a few nights later was repulsed. The three men who were killed in this first clash were buried close to the lines, while minute-guns fired shells over the graveyard toward the Germans. General Bordeaux, who commanded the French division at this point, saluted before each of the three graves, and then turned to the officers and men drawn up before him and said:

"In the name of the division, in the name of the French Army, and in the name of France, I bid farewell to Private Enright, Private Gresham, and Private Hay of the American Army.

"Of their own free will they had left a prosperous and happy country to come over here. They knew war was continuing in Europe; they knew that the forces fighting for honor, love of justice and civilization were still checked by the long-prepared forces serving the powers of brutal domination, oppression, and barbarity. They knew that efforts were still necessary. They wished to give us their generous hearts, and they have not forgotten old historical memories while others forget more recent ones.

They ignored nothing of the circumstances and nothing had been concealed from them—neither the length and hardships of war, nor the violence of battle, nor the dreadfulness of new weapons, nor the perfidy of the foe.

"Nothing stopped them. They accepted the hard and strenuous life; they crossed the ocean at great peril; they took their places on the front by our side, and they have fallen facing the foe in a hard and desperate hand-to-hand fight. Honor to them. Their families, friends, and fellow citizens will be proud when they learn of their deaths.

"Men! These graves, the first to be dug in our national soil and but a short distance from the enemy, are as a mark of the mighty land we and our allies firmly cling to in the common task, confirming the will of the people and the army of the United States to fight with us to a finish, ready to sacrifice so long as is necessary until victory for the most noble of causes, that of the liberty of nations, the weak as well as the mighty. Thus the deaths of these humble soldiers appear to us with extraordinary grandeur.

"We will, therefore, ask that the mortal remains of these young men be left here, be left with us forever. We inscribe on the tombs: 'Here lie the first soldiers of the Republic of the United States to fall on the soil of France for liberty and justice.' The passer-by will stop and uncover his head. Travellers and men of heart will go out of their way to come here to pay their respective tributes.

"Private Enright! Private Gresham! Private Hay! In the name of France I thank you. God receive your souls. Farewell!"

After the Germans had identified Americans on the Lunéville front it was supposed that they might maintain an aggressive policy and make the front an active one. The Germans were too crafty for that. They realized that the Americans were in the line for training, and so they gave them few opportunities to learn anything in the school of experience. In spite of the lack of co-operation by the Germans, the doughboys gained valuable knowledge during their stay in the trenches. There were several spirited patrol encounters and much sniping. American aviators got a taste of warfare by

going on some of the bombing expeditions of the French. They went as passengers, but one American at least was able to pay for his passage by crawling out from his seat and releasing a bomb which had become jammed. When every battalion had been in the trenches the American division was withdrawn, and for a short time in the winter of 1917 there was no American infantry at the front.

Curiously enough, the honor of participation in a major engagement hopped over the infantry and came first to the engineers. It came quite by accident. The 11th Engineers had been detailed for work behind the British front. Early on the morning of November 30 four officers and 280 men went to Gouzeaucourt, a village fully three miles back of the line. But this was the particular day the Germans had chosen for a surprise attack. The engineers had hardly begun work before the Germans laid a barrage upon the village, and almost before the Americans realized what was happening German infantry entered the outskirts of the place while low-flying German planes peppered our men with machine-gun fire. The engineers

were unarmed, but they picked up what weapons they could find and used shovels and fists as well as they retired before the German attack. According to the stories of the men, one soldier knocked two Germans down with a pickaxe before they could make a successful bayonet thrust. He was eventually wounded but did not fall into the hands of the enemy. Seventeen of the engineers were captured, but the rest managed to fight their way out or take shelter in shell-holes, where they lay until a slight advance by the British rescued them.

Having had a taste of fighting, the engineers were by no means disposed to have done with it. The entire regiment, including the survivors of Gouzeaucourt, were ordered first to dig trenches and then to occupy them. This time they were armed with rifles as well as intrenching-tools. They held the line until reinforcements arrived.

The conduct of the engineers was made the subject of a communication from Field-Marshal Haig to General Pershing. "I desire to express to you my thanks and those of the British engaged for the prompt and valuable assistance

rendered," wrote the British commander, "and I trust that you will be good enough to convey to these gallant men how much we all appreciate their prompt and soldierly readiness to assist in what was for a time a difficult situation."

CHAPTER XVII

OUR OWN SECTOR

THE Lunéville sector was merely a sort of postgraduate school of warfare, but shortly after the beginning of 1918 the American Army took over a part of the line for its very own. This sector was gradually enlarged. By the middle of April the Americans were holding more than twenty miles. The sector lay due north of Toul and extended very roughly from Saint-Mihiel to Pont-à-Mousson. Later other sections of front were given over to the Americans at various points on the Allied line. Perhaps there was not quite the same thrill in the march to the Toul sector as in the earlier movement to the trenches of the Lunéville line. After all, even the limited service which the men had received gave them something of the spirit of veterans. Then, too, the movement was less of an adventure. Motor-trucks were few and most of the men marched all the way over roads that were icy. The troops stood up

splendidly under the marching test and under the rigorous conditions of housing which were necessary on the march. They had learned to take the weather of France in the same easy, inconsequential way they took the language.

For a second time the German spy system fell a good deal short of its reputed omniscience. Seemingly, the enemy was not forewarned of the coming of the Americans. Despite the fact that the troops were tired from their long march, the relief was carried out without a hitch. Toul had been regarded as a comparatively quiet sector, and, while it never did blaze up into major actions during the early months of 1918, it was hardly a rest-camp. It was, as the phrase goes, "locally active." Few parts of the front were enlivened with as many raids and minor thrusts, and No Man's Land was the scene of constant patrol encounters, which lost nothing in spirit, even if they bulked small in size and importance.

It is probable that the Germans had no ambitious offensive plans in regard to the Toul sector. They tried, however, to keep the Americans at that point so busy and so harassed

that it would be impossible for Pershing to send men to help stem the drives against the French and the English. The failure of this plan will be shown in the later chapters.

Before going on to take up in some detail the life of the men in the Toul sector, it is necessary to record a casualty suffered by Major-General Leonard Wood. While inspecting the French lines General Wood was wounded in the arm when a French gun exploded. Five French soldiers were killed and Lieutenant-Colonel Charles E. Kilbourne and Major Kenyon A. Joyce, who accompanied General Wood, were slightly wounded. Wood returned to America shortly after the accident, and did not have the privilege of coming back to France with the division he had trained. But for all that he had a unique distinction. Leonard Wood was the first American major-general to earn the right to a wounded stripe.

The German artillery was active along the Toul front and the percentage of losses, while small, was higher than it had been in the Lunéville trenches. Of course, the American artillery was not inactive. It had a deal of practice dur-

ing the early days of February. The Germans attempted to ambush a patrol on the 19th and failed, and on the next night a sizable raid broke down under a barrage which was promptly furnished by the American batteries in response to signals from the trench which the Germans were attempting to isolate.

The first job for America did not come on the Toul sector, but near the Chemin-des-Dames. American artillery had already shown proficiency in this sector by laying down a barrage for the French, who took a small height near Tahure. Hilaire Belloc referred to this action as "small in extent but of high historical importance." The importance consisted in the fact that for the first time American artillerymen had an opportunity of rolling a barrage ahead of an attacking force. They showed their ability to solve the rather difficult timing problems involved. Certain historical importance, then, must be given to the action of February 23, when an American raiding-party in conjunction with the French penetrated a few hundred yards into the German lines and captured two German officers, twenty men, and a machine-

gun. This little action should not be forgotten, because it was practically the first success of the Americans. It gave some indication of the efficient help which Pershing's men were to give later on in Foch's great counter-attack which drove the Germans across the Marne.

It is interesting to know that every man in the American battalion stationed on the Chemin-des-Dames volunteered for the raid. Of this number only twenty-six were picked. There were approximately three times as many French in the party, and it must be remembered that the affair was strictly a French "show." The raid was carefully planned and rehearsals were held back of the line, over country similar to that which the Americans would cross in the raid. At 5.30 in the morning the barrage began and it continued for an hour with guns of many calibres having their say. The attack was timed almost identically with the relief in the German trenches and the Boches were caught unawares. The fact that a shell made a direct hit on a big dugout did not tend to improve German morale. The little party of Americans had already cut 2,999 miles and some yards

from the distance which separated their country from the war, and they were anxious to cover the remaining distance. Their French companions set them the example of not running into their own barrage. Poilus and doughboys jumped into the enemy trench together. There was a little sharp hand-to-hand fighting, but not a great deal, as the German officers ordered their men to give ground. The group of prisoners were captured almost in a body. Further researches along communicating trenches and into dugouts failed to yield any more.

Attackers and prisoners started back for their own lines on schedule time. The German artillery tried to cut them off. One shell wounded five of the Germans and six Frenchmen, but the American contingent was fortunate enough to escape without a single casualty. The French expressed themselves as well pleased with the conduct of their pupils. They said that the Americans had approached the barrage too closely once or twice, but this was not remarkable, as it was the first time American infantry had advanced behind a screen of shell fire. Their inexperience also excused their tendency

to go a little too far after the German trench-line had been reached.

On February 26 the Americans on the Toul front had their first experience with a serious gas attack. Of course, gas-shells had been thrown at them before, but this was the first time they had been subjected to a steady bombardment. Some of the men were not sufficiently cautious. A few were slow in getting their masks on and others took theirs off too soon. The result was that five men were killed and fifty or sixty injured by the gas. Two days later the Americans on the Chemin-des-Dames were heavily attacked, but the Germans were driven off.

March found the Toul sector receiving more attention than usual from the Germans. The Germans made a strong thrust on the morning of March 1. The raid was a failure, as three German prisoners remained in American hands and many Germans were killed. Gas did not prove as effective as on the last occasion. The doughboys were quick to put on their masks and as soon as the bombardment ended they waited for the attacking-party and swept them

with machine-guns. About 240 Germans participated in the attack. Some succeeded in entering the American first-line trench, but they were expelled after a little sharp fighting. An American captain who tried to cut off the German retreat by waylaying the raiders as they started back for their own lines was killed. On the same day a raid against the Chemin-des-Dames position failed. The Germans left four prisoners.

Two days after the attempted Toul raid Premier Clemenceau visited the American sector and awarded the Croix de Guerre with palm to two lieutenants, two sergeants, and two privates. The premier, who knows American inhibitions just as well as he knows the language, departed a little from established customs in awarding the medals. Nobody was kissed. Instead Clemenceau patted the doughboys on the shoulder and said: "That's the way to do it." One soldier was late in arriving, and he seemed to be much afraid that this might cost him his cross, but the premier handed it to him with a smile. "You were on time the other morning," he said. "That's enough." In an

official note Clemenceau described the action of the Americans as follows: "It was a very fine success, reflecting great honor on the tenacity of the American infantry and the accuracy of the artillery fire."

The Americans made a number of raids during March, but the Germans were holding their front lines loosely, and usually abandoned them when attacked, which made it difficult to get prisoners. An incident which stands out occurred on March 7, when a lone sentry succeeded in repulsing a German patrol practically unaided. He was fortunate enough to kill the only officer with his first shot. This took the heart out of the Germans. The lone American was shooting so fast that they did not realize he was a solitary defender, and they fled. On March 14 American troops made their first territorial gain, but it can hardly be classed as an offensive. Some enemy trenches northeast of Badonviller, in the Lunéville sector, were abandoned by the Germans because they had been pretty thoroughly smashed up by American artillery fire. These trenches were consolidated with the American position.

April saw the first full-scale engagement in which American troops took part at Seicheprey, but earlier in the month there was some spirited fighting by Americans. Poilus and doughboys repelled an attack in the Apremont Forest on April 12. The American elements of the defending force took twenty-two prisoners. The German attack was renewed the next day, but the Franco-American forces dislodged the Germans by a vigorous counter-attack, after they had gained a foothold in the first-line trenches. The biggest attack yet attempted on the Toul front occurred on April 14. Picked troops from four German companies, numbering some 400 men, were sent forward to attack after an unusually heavy bombardment. The Germans were known to have had 64 men killed, and 11 were taken prisoner.

Numerous stories, more or less authentic, were circulated after this engagement. One which is well vouched for concerns a young Italian who met eight Germans in a communicating trench and killed one and captured three. The remaining four found safety in flight. The youngster turned his prisoners over to a sergeant

and asked for a match. "I'll give you a match if you'll bring me another German," said the non-commissioned officer. The little Italian was a literal man and he wanted the match very much. He went back over the parapet, and in five minutes he returned escorting quite a large German, who was crying: "Kamerad."

While American soldiers on the front were gaining experience, which stood them in good stead at Seicheprey and later at Cantigny, great progress was made in the organization of the American forces. Late in the spring the first field-army was formed. This army was composed of two army corps each made up of one Regular Army division, one National Army division, and one division of National Guard. Major-General Hunter Liggett became the first field-army commander of the overseas forces, and it was his men who covered themselves with so much distinction in the great counter-blows of July.

CHAPTER XVIII

A CIVILIAN VISITOR

DESTINY always plays the flying wedge. There is always the significant little happening, half noticed or miscalculated, which trails great happenings after it. On March 19, 1918, a derby hat appeared in the front-line trenches held by the American Army in France. This promptly was accorded the honor by the army and the Allied representatives of being the first derby hat that had ever been seen in a trench. The hat had the honor to be on the head of the first American Secretary of War who had ever been in Europe in his term of office. And this first American Secretary of War away from home was presently to have the honor of helping to create the first generalissimo who had ever commanded an army of twenty-six allies.

All of which is to say that Newton D. Baker, on a tour of inspection of the A. E. F., whose

visit was to have such terrific fruition, repudiated the war counsels which would have kept him out of the trenches on this gusty March day, and went down to see for himself and all the Americans at home how the doughboy was faring, and what could be done for him.

And as he peered over the parapet into No Man's Land, Secretary Baker said: "I am standing on the frontier of freedom." The phrase grew its wings in the saying, and by nightfall it had found the farthest doughboy.

The Paris newspapers announced, on the morning of March 12, that Secretary Baker was in France. The troops had it by noon. And questions flew in swarms. It was discovered that he would review the brigade of veterans who had returned from service at the front on March 20, and that meanwhile he would investigate the lines of communication.

After a few days in Paris, during which Secretary Baker delivered all the persuasions he had brought from President Wilson on behalf of a unified command of the Allied armies, and had, it was rumored, turned the scale in favor of a generalissimo, the distinguished civilian

went to the coast to see the port city which was the pride of the army and the marvel of France.

The secretary rode to the coast on a French train, but, once there, he was transferred to an American train, which had to make up in sentimental importance the large lack it had of elegance.

A flat car was rapidly rigged up with plank benches. This had the merit of affording plenty of view, and, after all, that was what the secretary had come for.

After rolling over the main arteries of the 200 miles of terminal trackage, Secretary Baker inspected the warehouses, assembling-plants, camps, etc., and walked three mortal miles of dock front which his countrymen had evolved from an oozing marsh. He paid his highest compliments to the engineers and the laborers, and amazed the officers by the acuteness of his questions. If his visit did nothing else, it convinced the men on the job that the man back home knew what the obstacles were.

Secretary Baker's next visit was to the biggest of the aviation-fields, where again his technical understanding, as it came out in his ques-

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Secretary Baker riding on flat car during his tour of inspection of the American Expeditionary Forces.

tions, astounded and cheered the men who were doing the building.

Secretary Baker carried his office with him, a delightful discovery to the men in the aviation-fields, who had some problems sorely pressing for decision, and who found, when they told them to Mr. Baker, that he had no aversion to taking action on the spot. For example, at aviation headquarters, Mr. Baker asked if the fliers who came first from America were the first to have their commissions after the final flights in France. He learned that because of some delay in giving final instruction, through no fault of the aviators, these first commissions had not been given. Mr. Baker instituted a full inquiry at once, and at the end of it directed that the commissions, when finally awarded, should bear a date one day in advance of all others, so that the priority rightfully earned should not be lost.

After hours in the field, during which hundreds of machines with American pilots flew in squadron formation, and many experts did spectacular single flights, Mr. Baker made a short speech to the fliers. A French officer,

who had been instructing at the field, said to Mr. Baker: "With all these machines in the air, you see no more than a tenth of what America has in this one school. You will soon have no more need of French instruction. We have shown everything we know, and your young men have taken to the art with astonishing facility, as well as audacity, nerve, and resource. The danger and difficulties fascinate and inspire them. I think it must be what you call the 'sporting spirit.'"

As he was leaving the aviation-field Secretary Baker said: "The spirit of every man in this camp seems in keeping with the mission which brought him to France. The camps, appointments, and organization are admirable. It is gratifying to learn from their French instructors that our young aviators are proving themselves daring, cool, and skilful."

On the night of March 18 Secretary Baker began his preparations for a visit to the trenches. With a general commanding a division and one other officer he motored to the farthest point, where he dined and stayed the night in a French château. At dawn the next morning the party

made ready to go on. But the Boches appeared to have a hunch. They shelled the road on which Secretary Baker had planned to travel with such ferocity that the officers in command refused to take the risk of permitting Mr. Baker to go over it. The American general and all the French officers then begged Mr. Baker to give up the trip to the trenches. They wasted a lot of persuasion. Mr. Baker just went by another road. A colonel of about Mr. Baker's build had loaned him a trench overcoat, and some rubber boots, and the secretary had a tin helmet and a gas-mask, but he would wear the tin helmet only for a moment, and the mask not at all.

The officers in charge of the party found presently, to their acute horror, that even the trenches were not enough for Mr. Baker. Nothing would do him but a listening-post. And when he had finally got back safe, and had come back to the communication-trenches from the front, everybody breathed a sigh of relief. The relief was premature, for the liveliest danger of all was on the return motor trip, when an immense shell buried itself in a crater not

fifty yards from the secretary. Fortunately, the débris flew all in the opposite direction, and nobody was hurt.

The First Division heard an address the following day from Secretary Baker. "It would seem more fit," he said, "and I should much prefer it, if, instead of addressing you, I should listen to your experiences. Your division has the distinction of being the first to arrive in France. May every man in your ranks aim to make the First Division the first in accomplishment. With you came a body of the marines, those well-disciplined, ship-shape soldiers of the navy.

"Yours was the first experience in being billeted, and in all the initial details of adjusting yourselves to new and strange conditions. In this, as in developing a system of training, you were the pioneers, blazing the way, while succeeding contingents could profit by your mistakes.

"Day after day and week after week you had to continue the hard drudgery of instruction which is necessary to proficiency in modern war. You had to restrain your impatience to

go into the trenches under General Pershing's wise demand for that thoroughness, the value of which you now appreciate as a result of actual service in the trenches.

"If sometimes the discipline seemed wearing, you now know you would have paid for its absence with your lives.

"If I had any advice to give, it is to strike hard and shoot straight, and I would warn you at the same time against any carelessness, any surrendering to curiosity, which would make you a mark needlessly. The better you are trained the more valuable is your life to your country, as a fighter who seeks to make the soldier of the enemy, rather than yourself, pay the supreme price of war.

"On every hand I am told that you are prepared to fight 'to the end,' and I see this spirit in your faces. Depend upon us at home to stand by you in a spirit worthy of you."

Next Secretary Baker spoke, though informally, to the Forty-second Division, far better known as the Rainbow Division. There he explained some of the reasons for military secrecy.

"While it was in training at home I saw a good deal of the Rainbow Division," he said. "Then, one day, it was gone to France, where it disappeared behind the curtain of military secrecy which must be drawn unless we choose to sacrifice the lives of our men for the sake of publicity. The enemy's elaborate intelligence system seeks at any cost to learn the strength, the preparedness, and the character of our troops. Our own intelligence service assures us that the knowledge of our army in France which some assume to exist does not, in fact, exist.

"If we were to announce the identity of each unit that comes to France, then we would fully inform the enemy of the number and nature of our forces. Published details about any division are most useful to expert military intelligence officers in determining the state of the division's preparedness, and the probable assignment of the division to any section.

"But now it is safe to mention certain divisions which were first to arrive in France and have already been in the line. This includes the Rainbow Division, famous because it is representative of all parts of the United States.

This division should find in its character an inspiration to *esprit de corps* and general excellence. It should be conscious of its mission as a symbol of national unity.

"The men of Ohio I know as Ohioans, and I am proud that they have been worthy of Ohio. A citizen of another State will find himself equally at home in some other group, and the gauge of this State's pride will be the discipline of that group of soldiers, its conduct as men, its courage, and its skill in the trenches. You may learn more than war in France. You may learn lessons from France, whose unity and courage have been a bulwark against that sinister force whose character you are learning in the trenches. The Frenchman is, first of all, a Frenchman, which stimulates, rather than weakens, his pride in Brittany as a Breton, in Lorraine as a Lorrainer, and his loyalty and affection for his own town, or village, or home. In truth he fights for his family and his home when he fights for France and civilization. Thus, you will fight best and serve best by being first an American, with no diminution of your loyalty to your State and your community.

"With us at home the development of a new national unity seems a vague process compared to the concrete process you are undergoing. You are uniting North, East, South, and West in action. We aim to support you with all our resources, to make sure that you do not fight in vain."

The brigade of the veterans was reviewed on the last day of the camp inspection.

Secretary Baker went by motor, with officers and aides, as far as the foot of the hill from which he was to review the troops deploying in the Marne valley. Twenty days of rain had made the hilltop inaccessible by motor. As Secretary Baker started up one slope, General Pershing and his aides ascended another, and the two men met at the top.

The brigade swept by at company front, with full marching equipment. They were the first brigade to be reviewed after it had been in action, and they held to their flawless formation, chins up and chests out, in spite of clogging mud that was almost too much for the mules.

The review ended in compliments all around.

Secretary Baker's enthusiasm was conveyed even to the lesser officers. General Pershing said: "These men have been there and know what it is. You can tell that by the way they throw out their chests as they swing by."

America at last had her veterans. They were to dignify the coming gift of them to heroic size.

CHAPTER XIX

A FAMOUS GESTURE

WHEN America had put the power of all her eloquence into the growing demand among the Allies for a unified command, and when, as a result of this pressure, General Foch, chief of staff of the French Army and hero of the battle of the Marne, had been made generalissimo, General Pershing put into words in what the French called a "superb gesture" the final sacrifice his country was prepared to make.

The first of the great German drives of 1918 had halted, but the battle was nowhere near its end. General Foch was sparing every possible energy on the battle-front and heaping up every atom of force for his reserve.

And on the morning of March 28 General Pershing went to headquarters and offered the American Army in full to General Foch, to put where he pleased, without any regard whatever for America's earlier wish to fight with her army intact.

It was the final sacrifice to the idealistic point of view. It had indisputably the heroic quality. And as such it was rewarded in the countries of the Allies with appreciation beyond measure.

"I have come," said General Pershing to General Foch that morning, "to say to you that the American people would hold it a great honor for our troops if they were engaged in the present battle. I ask it of you in my name and in that of the American people.

"There is at this moment no other question than that of fighting. Infantry, artillery, aviation—all that we have are yours, to dispose of them as you will. Others are coming, which are as numerous as will be necessary. I have come to say to you that the American people would be proud to be engaged in the greatest battle in history."

This offer was placed immediately by General Foch before the French war-council at the front, a council including Premier Clemenceau, Commander-in-Chief Pétain, and Louis Loucheur, Minister of Munitions, and was immediately accepted. American Army orders went

forth in French from that day. And on those orders the army was presently scattered through the vast reserve army, from Flanders with the British to Verdun with the Italians and the French. They were not to go into actual battle, except near their own sectors, till the third monster drive, in July, for General Foch makes a religion of the reserve army and Fabian tactics. But they spread through the battle-line from Switzerland to the sea, as General Pershing had suggested, and "all we have" was at work.

Paris acclaimed the move royally. *La Liberté* wrote: "General Pershing yesterday took, in the name of his country, action which was grand in its simplicity and of moving beauty. In a few words, without adornment, but in which vibrated an accent of chivalrous passion, General Pershing made to France the offer of an entire people. 'Take all,' he said; 'all is yours.' The honor Pershing claims is shared by us, and it is with the sentiment of real pride that our soldiers will greet into their ranks those of the New World who come to them as brothers."

Secretary Baker, from American General Headquarters, gave out a statement. "I am delighted at General Pershing's prompt and effective action," he said, "in placing all the American troops and facilities at the disposal of the Allies in the present situation.

"It will be met with hearty approval in the United States, where the people desire their expeditionary force to be of the utmost service in the common cause. I have visited all the American troops in France, some of them recently, and had an opportunity to observe the enthusiasm with which officers and men received the announcement that they would be used in the present conflict. One regiment to which the announcement was made spontaneously broke into cheers."

The British Government issued an official statement on the night of April 1: "As a result of communications which have passed between the Prime Minister and President Wilson; of deliberations between Secretary Baker, who visited London a few days ago, and the Prime Minister, Mr. Balfour, and Lord Derby, and consultations in France in which General Persh-

ing and General Bliss participated, important decisions have been come to by which large forces of trained men in the American Army can be brought to the assistance of the Allies in the present struggle.

"The government of our great Western ally is not only sending large numbers of American battalions to Europe during the coming critical months, but has agreed to such of its regiments as cannot be used in divisions of their own being brigaded with French and British units so long as the necessity lasts.

"By this means troops which are not sufficiently trained to fight as divisions and army corps will form part of seasoned divisions, until such time as they have completed their training and General Pershing wishes to withdraw them in order to build up the American Army.

"Throughout these discussions President Wilson has shown the greatest anxiety to do everything possible to assist the Allies, and has left nothing undone which could contribute thereto.

"This decision, however of vital importance it will be to the maintenance of the Allied strength in the next few months, will in no

way diminish the need for those further measures for raising fresh troops at home to which reference has already been made.

"It is announced at once, because the Prime Minister feels that the singleness of purpose with which the United States have made this immediate and, indeed, indispensable contribution toward the triumph of the Allied cause should be clearly recognized by the British people."

Lord Reading, the British Ambassador at Washington, conveyed to President Wilson a message of thanks from the British Government, for "the instant and comprehensive measures" which the President took in response to the request that American troops be used to reinforce the Allied armies in France. The Embassy then gave out a statement that "the knowledge that, owing to the President's prompt co-operation, the Allies will receive the strong reinforcement necessary during the next few months is most welcome to the British Government and people."

The London papers reflected this sentiment in even stronger terms. Said the *Westminster Gazette:* "It seals the unity of the Allied forces

in France, and so far from weakening the determination to provide all possible reinforcements from this country, it will, we are confident, give it fresh energy. All the big loans America has made to Great Britain and France, her heavy contributions of food, her princely gifts through the Red Cross, and the high, stimulating utterances of President Wilson, have done much to strengthen the Allied morale and lend material assistance to the war against autocracy, but none of these counts so heavily with the masses, because there are few families here or in France who have not a personal and intimate interest in the soldiers battling on the plains of Picardy."

The *Evening Star* wrote: "In a true spirit of soldierly comradeship they will march to the sound of guns, and will merge their national pride in a common stock of courage for the common good. It is a chivalrous decision, and President Wilson, Mr. Baker, and General Bliss have done a very great thing in a very great way. The British and French people are moved by this splendid proof of America's fellowship in the fight for world freedom."

If this gift was so significant in spirit, it was also bravely helpful in round numbers. At the end of March, 1918, General Pershing had 366,142 soldiers in his command in France, and of these, after nine months of training and adjustment, he could put about 100,000 in the line.

And within three months after this time he had more than 1,000,000 soldiers in France, the Navy Department having accomplished the astounding feat of transporting 637,929 in April, May, and June. The month that the reinforcement of the French and British Armies was planned and accepted the transport figures jumped from forty-eight thousand odd to eighty-three thousand odd. The month of its first practical operation the figures jumped again to one hundred and seventeen thousand odd, and in the month of June, the month of the anniversary of the first debarkation, there was a transportation of 276,372 men.

The last few days of March, 1918, saw the first large troop movements from the American zone—that is, saw them strictly in the mind's eye. Actually, the rain came down in such

drenching downpours that the French villagers whom the motor-trucks passed did not so much see as hear the doughboys. Throughout the whole zone the activity was prodigious. Along the muddy roads two great processions of motor-trucks crossed each other day and night, the one taking the soldiers to one front, the other to another. Sometimes the camions slithered in the mud till they came to a stop in the gutter. Then the boisterous, jubilant soldiers would tumble out and set their shoulders under wheels and mud-guards, and hoist the car into the road again. The singing was incessant. The mood of the songs swung from "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" to "There'll Be a Hot Time in the Old Town To-night."

The exuberance of the soldiers knew no bounds. They were about to answer "present" to the roll-call of the big guns, the call they had been hearing for so many months, that had seemed to them so persistently and personally compelling. They were going to become a part of that living wall which for three years and a half had held the enemy out of Paris.

Those who were going to the British front

were particularly exultant because they expected to find open fighting there, the kind they called "our specialty."

To all the units going into the French and British Armies a general order was read, jacking up discipline to the topmost notch.

"The character of the service this command is now about to undertake," read the order, "demands the enforcement of stricter discipline and the maintenance of higher standards of efficiency than any heretofore required.

"In future the troops of this command will be held at all times to the strictest observance of that rigid discipline in camp and on the march which is essential to their maximum efficiency on the day of battle."

The first of the fighting troops arrived on the British front on the morning of April 10, after an all-night march. They were grimed and mud-spattered, hungry, and tired, and cold. But the cheering that rose from the Tommies when they recognized the American uniforms at the head of the column would have revived more exhausted men than they.

The first comers were infantry, a battalion of

them. Others came up during the day, with artillerymen and machine-gunners. The celebration of their coming lasted far into the next night, and the commanders of the British front exchanged telegrams of congratulation with the commanders of the French front that they were to be so welcomely refreshed.

But Generalissimo Foch, with his stanch determination not to be done out of his reserve, held the Americans back, and they were destined to remain behind the main battle-line for three and a half months longer.

Meanwhile the American strength was piling steadily up in the reserve, and in mid-May a large contingent of the National Army, said to be the first of them to land in Europe, reached the Flanders front and began to train at once behind the British lines, without preliminary work in American camps in France.

These men had what was probably the most exhilarating welcome of the war. The Tommies, many of them wounded and sick, poured out into the roadways as the new American Army arrived, and threw their caps into the air and split their throats with cheers. The

British had been terrifically hard pressed in the German offensive. They had given ground only after incredible fighting. They were, in the phrase of General Haig, at last "with their backs to the wall." They held their line magnificently, but they could not have been less than filled with thanksgiving that they were now to have the help of the least war-worn of all their allies.

CHAPTER XX

THE FIRST TWO BATTLES

WHILE Generalissimo Foch was strengthening his long line, with American troops as flying buttresses, those sectors delegated to the Americans in their own right saw two battles, within a few weeks of each other, which attained to the dignity of names. The battle of Seicheprey, the first big American defensive action, and the battle of Cantigny, the first big offensive, the one in the Toul sector, the other in Picardy, were the occasions of the American baptism of fire. The one was so valiant, the other so brilliant, and both were so reassuring to the high commands of the Allies, that they would deserve a special emphasis even if they had not the distinction of being America's first battles.

On the night of April 20–21 the German bombardment of Seicheprey, a village east of the Renners wood, and just northwest of Toul, grew to monstrous proportions. Frenchmen

who had seen the great Verdun offensive, in which the German Crown Prince had made a new record for artillery preparation, said that the heavy firing on the American sector eclipsed any of the action at Verdun.

The firing covered a front of a mile and a quarter. The bombardment was of high explosive shells and gas, apparently an effort to disable the return fire from American artillery. But all through the night the artillerymen sent their shells, encasing themselves in gas-masks.

Toward dawn the attack began. A full regiment of German soldiers, preceded by 1,200 shock troops, advanced under a barrage. Halfway across No Man's Land the American artillery laid down a counter-barrage, and many of the Germans dropped under it, but still the great waves of them came on, focussing on the village of Seicheprey.

The impact of their terrific numbers was too powerful to be withstood at once. The American troops fell back from some of their first-line trenches, which the first bombardment had caused them to hold loosely, and part of the forces fell back even from the village. The

Germans marched into the village, evidently believing it to have been totally abandoned, carrying their flame-throwers and grenades, but making no use of them. Suddenly they discovered that certain American troops had been left to defend the village, while the main force reformed at the rear, and hand-to-hand fighting in the street became necessary. An American commander sent word back that the troops were giving ground by inches, and that they could hold for a few hours.

Seicheprey, the first big American battle, had every element of the World War in little. Before the loss of the village, which occurred about noon, the troops defending it had fought from ambush and in the open, had fought with gas and liquid fire, with grenades, rifles, and machine-guns. In the inferno the new troops were giving proof of valor that was to come out later and be scattered broadcast, as a measure of what America would bring.

In and out of the streets of Seicheprey, in its little public square, from the yards of its houses, hundreds of American soldiers were fighting for their lives. France lay behind them, trusting to

be saved. Other Americans were behind them, racing into formation with French troops for the counter-attack. The defenders of Seicheprey, "giving by inches," had a battle-cry of their own, brief and racy, of the football-fields: "Hold 'em."

After a while the Germans took Seicheprey. The hideously pressed, slow-giving outpost moved back. Before the day had finished the shell-stripped streets of Seicheprey, sheltering the invaders, weltered again under the first American shells of the counter-attack. By nightfall the troops were creeping forward under the counter-barrage. The army, reformed, refreshed, and replenished, was on its way to take its own back again. The counter-battle lacked the monstrous gruelling of the first attack. It took less time. The superiority of numbers had shifted to the other side, and the white heat of determination did its share.

The Germans held Seicheprey about four hours.

The main positions of the army, which were threatened, were untouched because of the stoutness of the resistance at the village, and

most of the first-line positions were retaken with the rush of the counter-attack.

The German prisoners who were captured had many days' rations in their kits and extra loads of trench-tools on their backs. They had intended to hold the American trenches for several days, facing them the other way, before they commenced the new attack, which, in the plan of the German high command, was to break apart the French and American lines where they joined, above Toul. Once this wedge was into the Allied vitals the rest was to be easy.

Though Seicheprey did not count as a big battle in point of numbers engaged or numbers lost, it loomed large enough in the importance it had strategically. The German high command obviously expected little or nothing from the "green American troops." The shock troops had been rehearsed for weeks to take the American lines and hold them till the Allied line should be broken apart. In fact, it was nobly planned. The only compliment the Americans could squeeze out of it was that the Germans were sent over in many places eight to their

one. But the capture of Seicheprey lasted just four hours, and the disruption of the Franco-American line remained a mere brain-child of the Wilhelmstrasse.

The French soldiers who joined the counter-attack told thrilling stories of the Americans. They told that in one place north of Seicheprey, an American detachment was separated into small groups, and was cut off from the company to which it belonged through the entire fight. Behind the Americans and on their left flank were German units, but they could have retired on the right. They decided to stay and fight, so there they stayed, notwithstanding incessant enemy bombardment.

In the town of Seicheprey a squad of Americans found a few cases of hand-grenades. With these they put up a tremendous fight through the whole day, holding to a strip at the northern end of the village. They refused to surrender when they were ordered to, and at the end of the fighting only nine of the original twenty-three were left. By the grace of these nine men Seicheprey was never wholly German, even for the four hours.

One New England boy passed through the enemy barrage seven times to carry ammunition to his comrades. A courier who was twice blown off the road by shell explosions carried his message through and dropped as he reported. A lieutenant with only six men patrolled six hundred yards of the front throughout the day, holding communications open between the battalions to the right and left of him. A sanitary-squad runner captured by the Germans, escaped them and made his way into Seicheprey, tending the wounded there till help came. A machine-gunner found himself alone with his gun, and on being asked by a superior officer if he could hold the line there, replied that he could if he were not killed. He did. A regimental chaplain went to the assistance of a battery which was hard pressed, and carried ammunition for them for hours, then took his turn at the gun.

These make no roster of the heroes of Seicheprey. There were hundreds of them. But the censor's passionate aversion to details of all battles has scotched the narrative of heroes for the present.

Cantigny will warm the cockles of the American heart as long as it beats. There was a battle that for spirit, flare, brilliancy, came up to the rosiest dream that ever was dreamed, in Washington, or London, or Paris.

Cantigny, like Seicheprey, was not an engagement of great numbers. It was a little town that was hard to capture. It commanded a fine view of the American lines for miles back, and it had been able to withstand some violent attempts earlier, so it was particularly desirable. And it was in a salient, so that it formed an angle in the line. Its taking straightened the line, heartily disgruntled the Boches, who lost 200 prisoners and many hundred wounded and dead in defending it, and it gave the American troops their first taste of the offensive. But more than all that, it gave these same troops a record of absolutely flawless workmanship which, if not large, was at least complete.

The capture of Cantigny and 200 yards beyond it, which included the German second line, took just three-quarters of an hour.

In the niggardly terms of the communique: "This morning in Picardy our troops attacked

on a front of one and a fourth miles, advanced our lines, and captured the village of Cantigny. We took 200 prisoners and inflicted on the enemy severe losses in killed and wounded. Our casualties were relatively small. Hostile counter-attacks broke down under our fire."

It was on the morning of May 28. At a quarter to six a bombardment began. At a quarter to seven the troops went over the top. The barrage went first, a dense gray veil. Then came twelve French tanks. Just behind the tanks stalked the doughboys.

The soldiers moved like clockwork. There were no unruly fringes to be nipped by the barrage. There was no break in the methodical stride. They went forward first a hundred yards in two minutes. Then the barrage slowed to a hundred yards in four minutes. In a little while the troops had arrived at the edge of the village; then the close-quarter fighting began.

At 7.30 a white rocket rose from the centre of Cantigny, dim against the smoky sky, to tell the men behind that "the objective is reached and prisoners are coming."

The Americans found the enemy in confusion

and unreadiness, and the initial resistance from machine-guns at the town's edge was easily overcome. Where the burden of hard fighting came was in routing the Germans out from the caves and tunnels and cellars of the town into which they had retired.

There was a long tunnel in the town, which, after furious fighting, was surrounded and isolated. The flame-throwers were placed at both ends of the tunnel, and that episode was ended. Some of the caves were large enough to hold a battalion. These were handled by the mopping-up troops, who threw hand-grenades.

The prisoners began to file back almost immediately. One grinning Pittsburgher, wounded in the arm, marched in the rear of a prison squad. "That's handin' it to them Huns, blankety-blank 'em," he said cheerfully.

The village caught fire from the bombardment and the firing of the tunnel, and for hours after its capture the soldiers had to fight flames.

The first of the American "shock troops" went from the village on to the German second-line trenches, and under a hail of bullets from

German machine-guns dug themselves in and faced the trenches the other way.

All that day they held their prize unmolested. They had all the high ground beyond Cantigny, and an approach was, to put it mildly, precarious. But by five of the afternoon the German counter-attacks had begun. One wave after another stormed half-way up the hill, then tumbled down again, broken under the American artillery. Four counter-attacks were made against Cantigny, but all of them failed. The new positions were consolidated, under heavy fire and gas attack, and there they stayed.

This gallant battle called forth intemperate commendation from the headquarters of the Allies. The French despatch to Washington told officially of the high opinion the French held of it, and there were many congratulatory telegrams from London. The press of London and Paris glowed with praises. The London *Evening News* wrote:

"Bravo, the young Americans! Nothing in to-day's battle narrative from the front is more exhilarating than the account of their fight at Cantigny. It was clean-cut from beginning to

end, like one of their countrymen's short stories, and the short story of Cantigny is going to expand into a full-length novel, which will write the doom of the Kaiser and Kaiserism. We expected it. We have seen those young Americans in London, and merely to glance at them was to know that they are conquerors and brothers in that great Anglo-Saxon-Latin compact which will bring down the Prussian idol. . . . They do not swagger, and they have no war illusions. They have done their first job with swift precision, characteristic of the United States, and Cantigny will one day be repeated a thousand-fold."

The Times wrote:

"Our allies know the significance of that as well as we do. So, too, do the German generals and the German statesmen. It means that the last great factor between autocracy and freedom is coming into effective play on the battlefield. . . . There could be no reflection more heartening for the Allies or more dismaying to their adversaries."

"Their adversaries," meanwhile, were doing what they could to keep their dismay to them-

selves. In the German announcement of the loss of Cantigny there was mention only of "the enemy." The German people were not to know for a while that the "ridiculous little American Army" had got to work.

CHAPTER XXI

TEUFEL-HUNDEN

NO branch of service in the American Army was so quick to achieve group consciousness as the marines. To be sure, these soldiers of the sea had a considerable tradition behind them before they came to France. The world is never so peaceful that there is nothing for the marines to do. Always there is some spot for them to land and put a situation into hand. It is no fault of the marines that most of these brushes have been little affairs, and they have found, as Mr. Kipling says, that "the things that you learn from the yellow and brown will 'elp you a heap with the white."

The Navy Department has always been careful to preserve the tradition of the marines. The organization has never lacked for intelligent publicity. "First to fight" was a slogan which brought many a recruit into the corps. Even the dreary work of policing, which falls largely

to the marines, has been dramatized to a certain extent by that fine swaggering couplet of their song:

"If the army or the navy ever gaze on heaven's scenes,
They will find the streets are guarded by United States marines."

The belief that the marines would make a distinctive mark in the great World War was practically unanimous. Army officers couldn't deny it, war correspondents hastened to proclaim it, and the Germans admitted it by bestowing the name "Teufel-hunden" (devil-dogs) on the marines immediately after their first engagement. The marines themselves were second to no one in the consciousness of their own prowess.

"I understand," said a little marine just two days off the transport, "that this Kaiser isn't afraid of the American Army so much, but that he is afraid of the marines."

The boy didn't say whether one of his officers had told him that, but his belief was passionate and complete. However, the marines did not allow their high confidence to interfere in any

way with their preparations. They showed the same anxiety to make good on the training-fields that they later displayed on the line. Their camp in the American area was just a bit farther from the centre of things than that of any other organization. Whenever there was a review or a special show of any sort for a distinguished visitor, the marines had to march twelve miles to attend. And after that it was twelve miles home again. But they thrived on hard work. They shot, bayoneted, and bombed just a little better than any other organization in the first division. Sometimes individual marines would complain a little about the fact that they were worked harder than any men in the division, but they always took care to add that they had finished the construction of their practice-trench system days before any of the others. When they mentioned the fact that they had achieved this result by working in day and night shifts it was never possible to tell whether they were airing a grievance or making a boast. It is probable that they were something of the mind of Job, whose boils were both a tribulation and a triumph.

There was no doubt as to the opinion of the marines when it seemed for a time as if they might not get into the fighting. They did not go into the trenches with the first division, but were broken up and sent to various points for police duty. Of course they were bitterly disappointed, but they merely policed a little harder, and it was a severe winter for soldiers who went about with their overcoats unbuttoned, or committed other breaches of military regulations.

Since the marines did hard work well, they were rewarded by more hard work, and this was labor more to their taste. The reward came suddenly. On May 30 a unit of marines was in a training-camp so far back of the lines that it was impossible to hear the sound of the guns even when the Germans turned everything loose for a big offensive. On that same day the Germans reached the Marne east of Château-Thierry and began an advance along the north bank toward the city. That night the marines were ordered to the front.

They rode almost a hundred kilometres to get into the fight. It was late afternoon when

they reached a hill overlooking Château-Thierry. French guns all about them were being fired up to their very limit or a little beyond. The Germans were coming on. These marines had never been in a battle before, with the exception of a few who had chased little brown rebels in various brief encounters on small islands. They had never been under shell fire. And this their first engagement was one of the biggest in the greatest war in history. From the hill they could see houses fold up and fields pucker under the pounding of big guns. The marines were told that as soon as darkness came they would march into the town and hold the bridges against the German Army, which was coming on. Somebody asked a French officer some days later how these green troops had taken their experience as they waited the word to go forward. "They were concombres," said the Frenchman. Our word is cucumbers.

Finally, the order came for the advance. It was a dark night, but the marines could see their way forward well enough. The German bombardment had set fire to the railroad-station. The Americans kept in the shadows as

much as they could, but they danced around so much that it was difficult. They placed their machine-guns here and there behind walls and new barricades, so that they could enfilade the approaches to the bridges and the streets on the opposite side of the river. One lieutenant with twelve men and two guns took up a position across the river. It was up to him to stand off the first rush.

The shelling from the enemy guns was intensified during the night, but the infantry had not yet reached the town. It was five o'clock of a bright morning when the little advance post of the Americans saw the Germans coming across the open field toward the river. They were marching along carelessly in two columns and there were twelve men in every line. One of the machine-guns swung her nose around a little and the fight was on. At last the American was definitely in one of the major engagements of the war. American machine-gunners were doing their bit to block the advance on Paris. All day long the marines held the Germans back with their machine-guns. And that night they beat back a German mass attack

when the Boches came on and on in waves, with men locked arm in arm. They could hear them, for they sang as they rushed forward, and the machine-gunners pumped their bullets into the spots where the notes were loudest.

The next day the Americans were forced to give some ground when the order came to retire, but they had been through, perhaps, the most intensive two days of training which ever fell to the lot of green troops.

The marines did not have to wait long for retaliation. Other units of marines from other camps had been hurrying up to the front, and on June 6 an offensive was launched on a front of two and a half miles. The first day's gain was two and three-sixteenth miles and 100 prisoners were captured. This attack yielded all the important high ground northwest of Château-Thierry. The marines did not rest with this gain. They struck again at five o'clock in the afternoon, and by June 7 the attack had grown to much greater proportions. Four villages, Vinly, Veuilly-la-Poterie, Torcy, and Bouresches, fell into the hands of the French and Americans. The thrust was pressed

to a maximum depth of two miles on a ten-mile front. More than 300 prisoners were captured by the Americans. The attack was carried out under American command, Major-General James G. Harbord being in charge of the operation.

As in the Cantigny offensive, the Americans worked with great speed, and showed that they could make the rifle an effective weapon even under the changed conditions of modern warfare. But though they were swift they were not silent. They went over the top shouting like Indians, and they kept up the noise as they went forward. The second attack was carried out by the same men who had advanced in the morning. The early showing had been so promising that it was decided to go on, particularly as the Germans seemed to be somewhat shaken by the violence of the assault. In this new sweep the marines took ground on either side of Belleau Wood. They also captured the ravine south of Torcy. The Germans were not able to organize an effective counter-attack immediately, for they had been too much surprised by the thrust. Also the

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U. S. Marines in readiness to march to the front.

effective work of the American artillery made it difficult for the Germans to bring up fresh troops.

In the rough country over which the battle was fought there was opportunity for the fight to disintegrate into the little eddies where individual initiative counts for so much. In a fight near Le Thiolet, Captain James O. Green, Jr., found himself cut off by the Germans. He was accompanied by five privates. Back at regimental headquarters Green had already been reported as killed or captured. He proved the need of clerical revision, for he and his men fought their way back to the American lines. At one point ten Germans tried to intercept him, but the six Americans succeeded in killing or wounding every member of the enemy party. A single marine who was taking back a prisoner ran into two German officers and ten men. He fell upon them with rifle and bayonet and disposed of both officers and several of the men. Then he made his escape. Somebody told the marine when he got back to the American lines that he certainly had been "in luck."

"Hell! no," said the fighting man; "they took my prisoner away from me."

Still another marine was captured while dazed by a blow on the head. He recovered in time to deal his captor a tremendous punch on the jaw, and made his way back to the American lines. The favorite slogan of the Americans was: "Each man get a German; don't let a German get you."

Early on June 8 the Germans launched a counter-attack against the American position between Bouresches and Le Thiolet. This attack broke down. The trenches which the Americans held were new and shallow, but the troops were well supplied with machine-guns, and the German infantry never got closer than within a couple of hundred yards of the position. The marines were not yet content with their success. They took the initiative again on June 10 and smashed into the German lines for about two-thirds of a mile on a 600-yard front. In this attack two minenwerfer were captured. The object of the attack was to clean out Belleau Wood. The Germans retained only the northern fringe.

By this time the offensive had ceased to be wholly a marine affair. The 9th and 23d

Regiments of infantry, comprising what is known as the Syracuse Brigade, took up their positions on the right of the soldiers of the sea. During the next few days the Germans made several violent counter-attacks, but without success, and on June 26 the Americans pushed their gains still further by a successful assault south of Torcy, in which more than 250 Germans were captured. This victory gave Pershing's men absolute command of the Bois de Belleau, which was the strategic point for which the Germans had fought so hard.

It was after the Château-Thierry offensive that for the first time the American Army won a place in the German official communique. Before that they had been simply "the enemy," and once, upon the occasion of a successful German raid, North American troops. But now Berlin unbent a little and used the term "an American regiment." Germany was prepared to admit that America was in the war. It is just possible that some of their men who broke before the rush of the marines returned to give headquarters the information.

CHAPTER XXII

THE ARMY OF MANŒUVRE

WHILE the American Army was showing its quality in the minor battles of Seicheprey, Cantigny, Château-Thierry, and Vaux, and its quantity was showing itself in leaps of hundreds of thousands of men a month, a destiny was shaping for it, equally in circumstances and in the mind of Generalissimo Foch, which was to be even greater than that it had sacrificed in late March, when it submerged its identity and said: "Put us where you will."

For when, on July 18, the fifth German offensive suddenly shivered into momentary equilibrium and then rolled back, with Foch and the Allies pounding behind it, and when this counter-attack developed into a continuing offensive which was to straighten the Marne salient and throw back the Germans from before Amiens and do the future only knows what else besides, the Allied world said, in one

voice: "Foch has found his army of manœuvre, and it's the Americans."

This "army of manœuvre" has always been the king-pin of French strategy. While the Germans were trying two systems—first, the broad front attack which trusted to overbear by sheer weight anything which opposed it, and, second, the so-called Hutier system of draining the line of all its best fighters, and organizing shock troops immeasurably above the average for offensive, while the line was held by the rag-tag and bobtail—the French stuck to their traditional system. This was to hold the lines with the lightest possible number of men, of the highest possible caliber, and to thrust with a mobile force, foot-loose and ready to be swung wherever a spot seemed likely to give way.

It was with the "army of manœuvre," thrown up from Paris in frantic haste by Galliéni, in taxicabs and trucks, that General Foch made the miraculous plunge through the Saxon army at Fère-en-Tardenois, in September, 1914, which saved the first battle of the Marne.

When General Foch became generalissimo,

in late March, just after the first German offensive on March 21 had thrown the British back, and when the French were retreating at Montdidier, the expectation universally was that the Allies would begin an offensive, within the shortest possible time. Foch had been quoted all over the world as saying that "defensive fighting was no defense." Yet April, May, and June passed, and part of July, and except for scattering attacks along the Marne salient, and patient rear-guard action when the retreats were necessary, the Allies made no move.

The Austrian debacle came and went. Foch had Italy off his mind, and the Italians were more than taking care of themselves. Still he did not strike. And finally it became clear that he was showing this long patience because he wanted what every Frenchman wants first in every battle, and what he did not surely have until July—his army of manœuvre.

The fitness of the American Army for this brilliant use was dual: first, that its source was virtually inexhaustible; second, that it was better at offensive than defensive fighting.

The American Army had a quality, and the defect of that quality: it wanted to get to Berlin regardless of tactics. And while General Foch was trusting to time to prove to them that, pleasant or unpleasant, the tactics had to be observed, he turned their spectacular fire and exuberance to direct account.

Of course, the American troops in France then ready to fight could not alone make up the Allied army of manœuvre. They were the core of it, however, and their growing numbers guaranteed it almost indefinitely, so that the attack of which it was to be the backbone could safely be begun. Some of the troops originally intended for welding with the British and French Armies were kept in the line without change.

But in the main the statement was true: the American Army was to rove behind the Allied lines till Foch discovered or divined a German weakness to strike into.

In the second battle of the Marne, begun that July 18, when the Allies took the offensive again for the first time in more than a year, the crown prince and his army of approxi-

mately half a million were tucked down in the Marne salient, driving for Paris. The German line came down from Soissons to Château-Thierry, ran east from Château-Thierry along the Marne River, then turned up again to Rheims. In a space about thirty miles square the crown prince had imprudently poured all his troops, which, for the fifth offensive, begun July 15, included about a third of the man-power of the western front.

The Allied troops lying around the three sides of this salient were French and American on the western side, Americans across the bottom, east from Château-Thierry, and French, British, and Italian from the Marne up to Rheims. While the French and British were squeezing in the two sides at the top, it was the American job to keep the Germans from bursting out from the bottom, and, if possible, to break through or roll them back.

The Americans began the attack east of Château-Thierry, where the Germans had crossed the Marne and lay a few miles to the south of it. There had been lesser actions here for several days, in the process of stopping the

enemy offensive, and by the morning of the 18th the Americans dominated the positions around the Marne. The first day of the counter-offensive had magnificent results. The Germans were forced back on a 28-mile front, for a depth varying from 3 to 6 miles, and the Americans captured 4,000 prisoners and 50 guns. Twenty French towns were delivered, and the Germans began what appeared to be a precipitate retreat. Foch's attack was mainly on the flank of the crown prince's army, which had been left exposed in the rush toward Epernay and Châlons, far south of the Marne.

The infantry attack was made with little or no artillery preparation. The German general, Von Boehm, was plainly caught napping.

The communiqués of both sides were for once in agreement. The French said: "After having broken the German offensive on the Champagne and Rheims mountain fronts on the 15th, 16th, and 17th, the French troops, in conjunction with the American forces, attacked the German positions on the 18th, between the Aisne and the Marne on a front of forty-five kilometres [about twenty-eight miles]. We

have made an important advance into the enemy lines, and have reached the plateau dominating Soissons . . . more than twenty villages have been retaken by the admirable dash of the Franco-American troops. . . . South of the Ourcq our troops have gone beyond the general line of Marizy, Ste.-Genevieve, Hautvesnes, and Belleau."

The German communiqué said: "Between the Aisne and the Marne, the French attacked with strong forces and tanks, and captured some ground." Later in the same communiqué the conclusion was drawn: "The battle was decided in our favor."

On the second day, while the march under Soissons continued, and there were scattering gains on the Marne side, the number of Allied prisoners grew to 17,000, and the number of guns captured to 360. Nobody could tell, at this point, whether the crown prince's army was retreating voluntarily or involuntarily. In many places the Germans were taken by American soldiers from the peaceful pursuit of cutting wheat behind the lines. Some high officers were nabbed from their beds. On the other

hand, the fact that the German rear-guard actions were chiefly with machine-guns seemed to indicate that they were moving their heavy pieces back in fair orderliness.

On the third day the Germans were thrown back over the Marne, and the crown prince, having sent an unavailing plea to Prince Rupprecht for new troops, suddenly showed fight with the crack Prussian guards.

These guards had their worst failure of the war when they met the Americans. It is difficult to prevent the statement from sounding offensively boastful. It is, none the less, true. The Germans, having decided that their retreat was wearing the look of utter rout, and that they must resist fiercely enough to stop it, risked a British break-through to the north by throwing in Ludendorf's prize soldiers above the Marne. And although the American total of prisoners around Soissons had risen to nearly 6,000, and though they did force back the Prussian guard, they did not make prisoners from their number. One American after another told, afterward, with a sort of reluctant admiration, that the Prussian guard had died

where it stood. This fighting near the Ourcq, and fatally near the vitals of the encircled crown prince, was the most desperate of the second Marne battle.

On July 21 Château-Thierry was given up by the Germans, and the pursuing Allies, French and American, drove the enemy beyond the highroad to Soissons, and threatened the only highway of retreat, as well as the German stores. The supply-centre within the salient was Fère-en-Tardenois, and it was being raked by Allied guns from both sides of the salient.

The character of the fighting changed again, so that again it was impossible to make sure if Von Boehm intended to stand somewhere north of the Marne and put up a fight, or if he intended to make all speed back to a straight line between Soissons and Rheims. The resistance was by machine-gun, so that Americans, having their first big experience with the enemy, insisted that he had nothing but machine-guns to trust to. It is, of course, possible that the crown prince and Von Boehm knew no more than anybody else whether they were

going to clear out, men and supplies, or whether they would stop again and fight face foremost.

On July 22 the German command answered the question at least partially. On a line well above the Marne, they brought the big guns into play, and poured in shock troops. Airplanes from the Allied lines discovered, however, that the Germans were burning towns and storehouses for many miles behind the line.

The pressure on the Germans was being brought from the south, where the Americans were six or seven miles above Château-Thierry, and from the west and north, where the Franco-American troops were flaying the exposed side.

The stiffened resistance and the German artillery slowed, but could not stop, the Allied advance. The eastern side of the salient, from the Marne to Rheims, bore some desperate blows, but did not give way. As the pincers closed in, at the top of the salient, the German command appeared to go back to its original plan of attacking Rheims from the south.

This was the side on which British and Italian troops were co-operating with the French, and the German command got for its pains in

that direction a counter-attack which narrowed the distance from battle-line to battle-line across the top of the salient. The French menaced Fère-en-Tardenois, the German base of supplies.

Allied aviators bombed these stores, the long-range guns pounded at them, and what with these and the conflagrations started defensively by the Germans the Marne salient was a caldron which turned the skies blood-red.

On July 24 the ground gained all along the line averaged two miles. The British southwest of Rheims made a damaging curve inward, and the shove around the other two sides was fairly even.

On July 25, one week from the beginning of the offensive, the Americans and French from the Soissons side and the British and French from the Rheims side had squeezed in the neck of the trap till it measured only twenty-one miles. The French arrived within three miles of Fère-en-Tardenois, and although the German resistance increased again, the evacuation of Fère and the removal of stores to Fismes, far up on the straight line, were foreshadowed.

The road leading between the two supply-bases was shelled incessantly, and the difficulties of resistance within the fast-narrowing salient became almost superhuman. But the rear-guard of the Germans "died to a man," to quote the observers, and the rear action held the Allied gains to a few miles daily.

A definite retreat began on the morning of July 27, with what the airmen reported as an obvious determination to make a stand on the Ourcq. The forest of Fère was taken, and many villages, but the fighting was insignificant because, in the language of the communiqués, "our forces lost contact with the enemy." Possibly this is what the famous phrase of the Ludendorf communiqué, "The enemy evaded us," had in mind.

There was a certain psychological stupidity in this German decision to make a stand on the Ourcq. It was on the Ourcq that Joffre and Foch made the fatal stroke of the first Marne battle, and the very name of the river inspired France.

While this retreat was in progress, the swiftest of the battle, the German communiqué read:

"Between the Ourcq and the Marne, the enemy's resistance has broken down. Our troops, with those of our allies, are in pursuit."

On the 29th the Germans crossed the Ourcq, with the Americans behind them. The "pursuit" continued. The American troops, with French to the right and left of them, forced the enemy to within a mile of the Vesle, where his halt had no hope of being more than temporary. The brilliant charge across the Ourcq was done by New Yorkers—the "fighting 69th," which refuses to be known by its new name of "165th." Edwin L. James, writing of this charge for the New York *Times*, said: "There is doubt if any chapter of our fighting reached the thrills of our charge across the Ourcq yesterday. Americans of indomitable spirit met a veritable hell of machine-guns, shells, gas, and bombs in a strong position, and broke through with such violence that they made a salient jutting into the enemy line beyond what the schedule called for."

This American charge cured the Germans of any intention to stay on the Ourcq. The resistance, after that first attack, was sporadic and ineffectual. Village after village was reclaimed.

It became plain that the whole Marne salient was to be obliterated, and that the Germans could not stop till they reached the thirty-six-mile stretch directly from Soissons to Rheims, at which they had strong intrenchments.

One terrific stand was made by the Germans at Sergy, just above the Ourcq. It changed hands nine times during twenty-four hours, with Americans fighting hand to hand with the Prussian guards. Sergy was taken in the first rush over the Ourcq, but a counter-attack by the Prussian Fourth Guard Division, under artillery barrage, gave them the city. Once these guards were in the city, the artillery barrage could no longer play over it, and to the stupefaction of the Germans, the Americans rushed in and fought hand to hand till they cleared the town, while the German guns were powerless. Time and again this process was repeated, till at last the Germans gave it up and joined the general retreat. This counter-attack is believed, however, to have enabled the crown prince to reclaim great stores of supplies in a woods north of the village.

At the end of these two weeks of infantry

fighting the artillery took up the task, and the infantry rested for a day, though on August 2 they made a two-mile gain.

The total of German prisoners for that fortnight was 33,400.

The hideous fighting above the Ourcq between the Americans and the picked German divisions continued for days, with each day marking a small advance for the Americans. On August 2 the French regained Soissons.

On August 3 the Allies advanced six miles, retook fifty villages, and reached the south bank of the Vesle. American forces entered Fismes. The salient was annihilated.

On August 4 Fismes fell, and the great supply and ammunition depot became Allied property. The enemy was forced to cross the Vesle, and victory on victory was reported along the line which so lately had dipped into the nerve-centres of France.

The second battle of the Marne had been won.

The part of it achieved by America could not fail to stir her heart to pride and to exaltation. Though numerically the troops were few enough,

The capture of Sergy.

"The Americans rushed in and fought hand to hand till they cleared the town."

not more than 270,000, they traversed the longest distance of the salient, from Vaux, at its lowest tip, to Fismes, on the straight line. Their fighting called forth comment from French officers who had been through the four years of the war, which could not be called less than rapturous. "They are glorious, the Americans," rang through France. Clemenceau, speaking of Foch at the end of the battle to which the Americans had contributed so much, said: "He looks twenty years younger." He had both found and proved his "army of manœuvre."

The story of this first battle's heroes must wait, though it will be long enough when it comes, and can include something more heartening than that "a boy from New England did thus and so," and "the army is thrilled by the heroic feat of —— of Michigan."

Probably the first death in France in which the whole nation grieved was that of young Quentin Roosevelt, aviation lieutenant, son of the ex-President, who fell in an air fight in the preliminary to the battle on July 17. He was last seen in a fight with two enemy planes. His machine fell within the German lines.

Weeks later the onward Allied army found his grave, marked, in English, "Lieutenant Quentin Roosevelt, buried by the Germans," and an official despatch from Germany stated that he had been buried with full military honors.

Colonel Roosevelt made a brief statement: "Quentin's mother and I are very glad that he got to the front, and had a chance to render some service to his country and to show the stuff there was in him before his fate befell him." The news of his death arrived just a few weeks after the news that he had downed his first German plane. The simple sincerity of this statement, and its courage, gave an example to the mothers and fathers of fighters which no one feared they would fail to come up to. And when the casualty lists from the second Marne battle came in, every bereavement was stanched by the fact that "they had shown the stuff there was in them."

Certainly not least in importance was the fact that they had shown it to the Germans. An official German Army report was captured, July 7, on an officer taken in the Marne region. After giving a prodigious amount of

detail concerning the American Army, its composition, destination, and so on, appended the following opinion:

"The 2d American Division may be classified as a very good division, perhaps even as assault troops. The various attacks of both regiments on Belleau Wood were carried out with dash and recklessness. The moral effect of our firearms did not materially check the advance of the infantry. The nerves of the Americans are still unshaken. . . . Only a few of the troops are of pure American origin; the majority is of German, Dutch, and Italian parentage, but these semi-Americans, almost all of whom were born in America and never have been in Europe, fully feel themselves to be true-born sons of their country."

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